

INSIDE

Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

SOCCER

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Force juggernaut crashes to a halt

By Aidan Ormond

Spectacular and thoroughly invigorating though they were in the first leg, Sydney Olympic's two-leg elimination final with Adelaide City Force is far from over. A side like Zoran Matic's is at its most dangerous when written off, like they were earlier this season when they sat on the bottom of the NSL.

Put simply, it's not beyond the Zebs to win 3-0, thus going through on the away goals rule. A certain 4-0 win over another Sydney side in the finals some years ago proof - as if we didn't already know - that you take nothing for granted when you land in Adelaide.

However, City's problem will be in containing the likes of Mendez, Marusic, Emerton and Cardozo. It's almost impossible to think that this foursome - on current form - cannot conjure up, or set up at least, one or more vital away goal.

And therein lies Matic's dilemma. He simply must go forward. Plus Costanzo is suspended and Tobin left Belmore injured.

Will Culina encourage his usual entertaining stance in the hope that, despite what Force does in front of goal, his side scores and thus give them a cushion no matter what? This is Culina's natural instinct, and Olympic's strengths, so I'm picking Olympic to go through despite possibly not winning the second leg in front of an expected 15,000 at Hindmarsh.

And besides, they are still smarting over their dumping by City in last year's final home and away round thus scuppering their top six chances, a fact I'm sure Culina will be keen to

exploit to his advantage in the lead-up.

If however Force can achieve the impossible, expect the underrated Nick Sabljak to be front and centre of what would be the most famous of wins. His form this season has been sensational, and he showed enough on Sunday to suggest he can fire up the City juggernaut.

See Arlo White's match report and second leg preview on pages 14 and 15.

If Marconi can somehow overcome the powerful Carlton side in the other elimination final it would set up a huge Sydney derby with Olympic. Somehow I don't think this will happen. Carlton simply has too much big time experience to throw away their hard-earned lead.

Coach Stu Munro knows that wily Dave McPherson - in prime form for the finals - together with Marth, Horvat and Lapsansky have the right temperament for such an occasion. And in Simon Colosimo and Archie Thompson (now a strong Olyroo candidate) they have two wonderfully inventive players to complement the side's dour facets.

Still Marconi could win it, but it won't happen by trying to outmuscle their opponents - they tried that on Saturday with disastrous consequences (the home team was penalised 27-11 in the free kick count with six yellow and one red card given.)

The key to victory is Sean Babic and Chad Gibson. If Babic can shrug off his fitness problems - and this is only a possibility - he can continue his goalscoring vein against a defence that has been slow at times this year.

Continued on page two



NSL finals series

We've got it covered with all the stats, previews and news on the NSL finals.

Marcus Stergiopoulos exclusive

Stergiboy's year with the Kingz

Plus, Walter Ardone (right) and Matildas captain Alison Forman talks Pacific Cup



S-news

Rounds 25-34	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	G/D
Adelaide Force	10	8	1	1	24	10	25	+14
Carlton	10	7	1	2	17	10	22	+7
Melbourne Knights	10	6	0	4	17	14	18	+3
Perth Glory	10	6	0	4	13	11	18	+2
Wollongong Wolves	10	5	2	3	23	10	17	+13
Brisbane Strikers	10	4	4	2	13	10	16	+3
Marconi Stallions	10	5	1	4	20	20	16	=
Parramatta Power	10	5	0	5	13	9	15	+4
Canberra Cosmos	10	4	3	3	15	18	15	-3
Football Kingz	10	5	0	5	14	20	15	-6
South Melbourne	10	4	2	4	17	15	14	+2
Sydney Olympic	10	3	2	5	10	13	11	-3
Northern Spirit	10	3	0	7	14	17	9	-3
Newcastle Breakers	10	2	2	6	9	16	8	-7
Sydney United	10	2	1	7	5	18	7	-13
Gippsland Falcons	10	1	1	8	7	20	4	-13

Rnds 1 to 17*	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	G/D
Sydney Olympic	17	10	3	4	32	16	33	+16
Wollongong Wolves	17	9	5	3	33	24	32	+9
Newcastle Breakers	17	8	6	3	25	21	30	+4
Carlton	17	8	5	4	30	18	29	+12
Perth Glory	17	8	5	4	31	22	29	+9
Brisbane Strikers	17	8	4	5	26	16	28	+10
Football Kingz	17	7	5	5	34	28	26	+6
Marconi Stallions	17	8	2	7	22	23	26	-1
South Melbourne	17	6	4	7	25	29	22	-4
Parramatta Power	17	6	3	8	29	30	21	-1
Northern Spirit	17	6	2	9	16	23	20	-7
Gippsland Falcons	17	5	5	7	12	20	20	-8
Adelaide Force	17	4	6	7	16	19	18	-3
Canberra Cosmos	17	4	3	10	21	32	15	-11
Melbourne Knights	17	4	3	10	16	33	15	-17
Sydney United	17	3	3	11	10	24	12	-14

Rds 18-34	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	G/D
Adelaide Force	17	12	2	3	41	18	38	+23
Perth Glory	17	11	2	4	29	20	35	+9
Melbourne Knights	17	9	3	5	28	24	30	+4
Marconi Stallions	17	8	5	4	31	26	29	5
Carlton	17	9	2	6	25	21	29	+4
Wollongong Wolves	17	8	4	5	39	20	28	+19
South Melbourne	17	8	3	6	30	22	27	+8
Parramatta Power	17	8	2	7	23	17	26	+6
Football Kingz	17	8	0	9	23	31	24	-8
Sydney Olympic	17	6	4	7	24	24	22	0
Brisbane Strikers	17	5	6	6	20	24	21	-4
Newcastle Breakers	17	6	3	8	19	23	21	-4
Canberra Cosmos	17	5	6	6	23	32	21	-9
Northern Spirit	17	5	1	11	25	35	16	-10
Gippsland Falcons	17	2	3	12	11	29	9	-18
Sydney United	17	2	2	13	9	34	8	-25

Here is a quick look at how some of the sides did in various stages of the season.
*Includes deferred games played in second half of the season.
Tables courtesy of McRopod Concepts Sport Systems.

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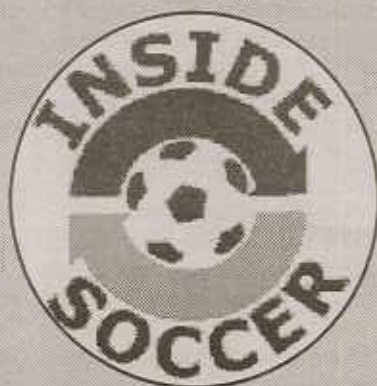
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SOCCEROO UPDATE

We can confirm we're playing Paraguay, at the Sydney Football Stadium on 9 June; The Gabba on 12 June; and on 15 June at Colonial Stadium in Melbourne. Expect Okon back and Stuart Lovell is a chance of being selected. Still on matters national, new youth coach Ange Postecoglou arrived in Brisbane last night to see some of the best young Queenslanders at U/16 level. He is with Jim Selby, the national coaching manager.

SECOND TEAM IN PERTH?

Given the wonderful success of Perth Glory some say a second team should be explored. On the other hand others say Perth may not be big enough for a second side. If sources close to Soccer West Coast (the state federation) are to be believed, the project to have a second side in the NSL from Perth is most definitely a work in progress, with SWC backing the venture. It is also believed that Glory and SWC are not on the best of terms, with Glory stating in the past it is too early for a second side in Perth.

SAVAGE SIGHTING

In amongst the heaving mass of excited girlie teenage poppets at the Savage Garden gig at the Sydney Ent Cent was Spirit hardman and Inside Soccer columnist Ian Crook. Not the sort of place you expect to see the tough Englishman, although judging from his comments, he was there under protest. The things we do for our women.

SPIDER BACK FOR THE GOLF

Socceroo Zeljko Kalac will return from the Netherlands on Thursday May 25, just so he can take part in the Sydney United Golf Day. "I was going to return on that weekend, however I found out about the Sydney United Golf Day and I had to change my flight. I love golf but it also gives me a chance to play golf with my many friends at Sydney United Soccer Club. The Netherlands is not really renowned for its golf courses and I am looking forward to resting in Australia with my new family (Zeljko and his wife Diana, recently welcomed their first child into the world) and having a hit around a few courses," said Kalac. The 27 year old, 2.02 metre goalkeeper made 143 appearances with Sydney United before embarking on a career with Roda JC in the Netherlands where he has become a crowd favourite.

WA LEAGUE'S NEW SPONSOR

The W.A. Premier League has announced a new sponsor in Cellular One who are part of the A.A.P.T. SmartChat group. They take over from McInerney Ford who have shifted their focus to the 1st Division. Cellular One has signed a three-year contract with the League worth \$25,000 a season. And with WA state league side Cockburn City languishing at the foot of the table (after four rounds with just one win to their credit), well-respected coach Gerry Christie had enough and resigned. It came after his team put in a depressing display against

Inglewood United recently, eventually going down 2-0.

POWER SCHOOL

Parra Power have launched its Centre of Excellence, the first fully funded soccer academy in the NSL designed to 'educate and develop individual players', said a Power press release. When there is a press conference we can tell you more about this interesting development.

HAMMING IT UP IN NORWAY

Floreat Athena have lost the services of diminutive forward Vas Kalogeracos to European interests. Kalogeracos has spent the past couple of months in Perth waiting to hear from several clubs with whom he trialled earlier in the year, and the call finally came last week from Norwegian outfit HamKam. He will sign with the club initially for a two month period, but should things work out well between the two parties that is expected to be extended.

CURCIJA SIGNS

Perth Glory have signed Michael Curcija for next season, writes Brett Klucznik. But the promising forward may be on the move again without making an appearance for Glory. Curcija, who has signed a three-year agreement with Glory that needs only to be rubber stamped by the club board, is currently trying his luck with Yugoslavia's Partizan Belgrade and should that club like what they see, the forward is expected to stay in Europe to further his career. Glory chairman Roger Lefort was quick to insist that Glory was not looking to cash in on a possible transfer fee for Curcija. "We weren't out to chase the money, we were out securing the player," he said. "We have made an offer to Curcija, he has agreed and signed and it is now subject to board approval. Players know that they can come here and play in front of big crowds, it's an attraction."

NGATA THE TIP

For the Kingz player of the year, captain Harry Ngata is the hot tip to win. Those coming close would be Vichelich and Stergiopoulos, two players who have featured in IS's all-stars side. Next week will feature the final all-stars of the home and away rounds, for the month of April and early May. And in Wollongong, Paul Reid has signed for two more years. Reid is a former teammate of Harry Kewell's.

SOME CROWD STATS

Top 5 regular season crowds: 98/99 Spirit-Olympic 18,985, 1979 Newcastle KB-Olympic 18,367, 9/89 Perth-Sth Melb 18,067, 97/98 Perth-Melb.Knights 17,764, 98/99 Spirit-Perth 17,722. KB Utd crowds were (comparatively) great, they had two more 12000+ crowds. There were some good crowds in 60's, eg APIA-Pan Hellenic 19,676 in 1963, but these were by far the exception; average NSW first division crowds peaked at 3,400 in 1963, but by 1967 this average was down to 2,250. Thank you Andrew Howe for these figures.

Continued from front page

And should Gibson be sufficiently focussed - and given Marth's presence in the middle of the park this is no easy task - Marconi's most influential player this season would love to wreak some havoc.

And let's not forget Brad Maloney and Mike Smith. Both will be key if the Stallions are to stay on the finals bill, particularly if Carlton try getting physical with a side they perceive to be weaker than them.

See pages 12 and 13 for John Vrtaric's first leg analysis and second leg preview.

This tie is not over, but in finals football it is not often that a side so obdurate as Carlton's will let go of the bone.

* And for the much-anticipated major semi-final first leg in Wollongong between Wolves and Perth Glory, see facing page for Greg Blake's analysis.

Wollongong Wolves v Perth Glory

Will Nick T's barnstorming reds get Bernd?

By Greg Blake

The final chapter of Wollongong's one very special season will be written by around 7pm this Sunday. The double chance ensures Wollongong's world doesn't implode should they fail in the club's biggest exam since 1988 - when John Fleming's Wolves crashed on the runway after finishing top of the ladder - but this weekend's first leg Major Semi Final against Perth may ultimately determine their season anyway.

The most anticipated match-up of the season to date will either set Wollongong up for a genuine crack at the big prize or open the door for Perth to end the campaign with momentum and two consecutive home finals.

And the mood of both camps suggests as much.

Perth boss, Bernd Stange, smiling, relaxed and expansive, is seemingly lapping up the hysterical attention his team is receiving in the west.

Already intense by nature, Wollongong's Nick Theodorakopoulos has actually underscored the enormity of the event by politely evading much of the media spotlight.

Unusually tight-lipped and reluctant to allow his charges unwanted distractions, Theodorakopoulos offers merely broad philosophies.

"Just getting to where we are is a bonus for both the club and the south coast of NSW," he says.

"In the finals there is an element of luck, a bit like Russian Roulette."

A loose interpretation probably reflects the general feeling that Wollongong has been a bit special in the preliminaries, but we can't gauge how good until the punches start flying in centre ring.

The Wolves play the game with the button stuck on fast-forward; a confrontational, in-your-face attacking game and if they approach the finals in the same manner a Wollongong success this season would be good for football.

But Wollongong has done most damage this summer when bullying sides we now know couldn't cut it; they've not beaten Perth, Marconi or Olympic and go into the play-offs with the poorest record of all the finalists in all-top six match-ups

during the regular season.

And the record-breaking 72 goals is deceptive, with 59 (@ 2.68 per game) coming against the also rans and a much less productive 13 coming in Wollongong's dozen games against other top six sides (@ 1.08 per game).

The lauded multi-pronged assault force has thus far hoisted its skirt and squealed 'eeeeek' when confronted by teams which neither wilt nor panic.

Glory does neither.

Perth is too polished to be overawed by the occasion, nor will a team which plays to huge crowds every second week be intimidated by the expected 15,000 full-house at Brandon Park.

The NSL pre-season favourite has been good to very good since opening day; winning more and losing less than any other team and capable of dishing out a slapping.

Stange's rebounding defensive unit led the league in clean sheets this season and they'll tackle Wollongong's customary blistering start on Sunday with confidence, having not conceded a single goal in the last 287 minutes of the regular season.

And that includes the crucial win less than two weeks back when Petkovic, Naven, Miller, Valle, Harnwell and Co. kept the Wolves to zero at Brandon Park for only the second time this season.

On its day Wollongong suggests that it is good enough to win it all this season, but living life dangerously against very good teams is fraught with danger.

Bravado and daring will occasionally win the big occasion, high stakes games, but against a Perth team which has rolled every other play-off team at least once this year and taken all six points from the Wolves this year Wollongong will have to dig deeper and find much more.

If Nick's boys can inflict some damage in this first leg and take something substantial to defend to WA a week later Wollongong is as good as even money over three finals in four weeks, two of them at home.

If they blow it the Wolves will struggle to maintain the pace over four finals on consecutive weekends and culminating with Perth at Perth on grand final day.

This weekend is every bit the season decider for the Wollongong wonders.



Key players: Wolves' English striker Stuart Young and Glory's Robbie Trajkovski, who played in the last big Grand Final, when 40,000 fans saw Brisbane beat Sydney United in 1997.

43,000 fans for Wolves' visit to Perth

By Brett Klucznik

The rush for the hottest sports ticket in Perth lasted just four days as Glory's historic leap into the NSL record books as minor premier saw finals fever sweep the city. Queues formed quickly at the various outlets around the city - and phones were running hot at Ticketmaster - when tickets went on sale last week for the second leg clash with Wollongong Wolves. The game is to be held under lights at Subiaco Oval on Saturday, May 27.

Sales were restricted to the club's Golden Members and Season Ticket Holders on the first day of sales with more than 5,000 sold in the first three hours, rising to over 14,000 by 5.00pm. Members and Official Supporters Club members got their chance on Tuesday and by day's end 28,352 tickets had been snapped up in total.

That left just 14,648 tickets for the general public who were allowed to purchase on Wednesday.

It was obvious these wouldn't last long and with the telephone call centre working at full capacity with over 100 people taking calls, 4,000 seats were sold in the first hour.

Demand was so great that the club put on sale an addition 3,200 restricted viewing seats at discounted prices.

A full house come match day should see a new NSL attendance record set, not just for the finals series, but for the competition as a whole.

Glory established a Preliminary Final record of 27,548 when they downed Marconi 1-0 at the W.A.C.A. Ground last May. But the largest crowd was three years ago when 40,446 turned up to watch the Grand Final between Brisbane Strikers and Sydney United at Suncorp Stadium.

And that may not be the only record broken by Glory. West Coast Eagles have the ground attendance record of 42,209 set in June 1991 against St Kilda, but indications are that Glory will pass that mark with ease, a fact which pleases Glory general manager Roger Lefort no end.

"At this stage we are looking at a full house at Subiaco Oval, something around 43,000," he said. "If we can sell almost 43,000 tickets in three days then we are talking about enormous potential. I say to the AFL, watch out."

Teenage sensation Ivan Ergic was also thrilled at the prospect of playing in front of such a huge crowd.

"43,000 is a big, big crowd, it's like a European crowd. We're all looking forward to playing here (Subiaco Oval) and we shouldn't lose with that crowd behind us."

At this stage, the May 27 game will not be shown live on TV in Perth despite being sold out well in advance, but there is the possibility that local ABC programmers may consider a delayed telecast.

"I've asked them about it and they are looking into it," Lefort said.

Tickets: Ring Wolves on 4226 3988

Grandstand: Adult \$16

Concession \$13

7 to 16 Yrs \$8

0 to 6 Yrs \$3

General Admission: Adult \$13

Concession \$13

7 to 16 Yrs \$8

0 to 6 Yrs \$3

Family(2/Adults 2/7 to 16 Yrs) \$32

Family Extras \$5 per Extra Child





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How lame was Sydney United over the course of its worst-ever NSL season?

Lame enough that United's entire team was outscored over the course of the season by Adelaide City's 22-goal marksman, Damian Mori, with the wooden spooner's team total of 19 also equalled by Olympic's Pablo Cardozo and Michael Curcija of South Melbourne.

Last season Cardozo and then Sydney United's Mile Sterjovski were also a goal better than lamentable Gippsland in 98/99, but such statistical gems have otherwise been a rarity.

You have to go back to 1985, when South Melbourne's Charlie Egan edged Newcastle Rosebud 21 to 20, for the last time it occurred and back to 1984, when South's Doug Brown was more prolific than Brisbane City (22 to 21) to find the only previous occasion.

Just to publicly dak the Falcons completely, Mori's individual goal tally over his last five campaigns is an impressive 104, a mere 22 less and rapidly gaining on Gippsland's pathetic 126 over an identical period.

Somebody draw the tarp and hand me the rifle, please.

The concept of players outscoring whole teams over a 34-round season is slightly comical, but also reflective of diminishing NSL standards.

The fact that over the course of a season we can measure the contributions of single individuals favorably against those of entire clubs lends significant support to those who have long maintained that there are too many clubs in the league.

I'd always thought otherwise, but it is telling that the only other period in which similar disproportionate figures were posted was between 1984 and 1986, when the NSL expanded to 24 clubs and split into two divisions.

A diluted talent pool created huge gulfs between the top clubs and their poorer relations, just as is developing now between the NSL haves and have-nots.

While back to a workable 16-club NSL these days, the equaliser in the equation is those 100 or more Aussie top-liners now plying their trade overseas.

The rich get richer and can afford to lure the top shelf talent, leaving the obvious culprits unable to compete and with little light at the end of the tunnel.

Hands up who didn't pick the trifecta to fill the places at the foot of the NSL standings long before the 99/00 even kicked off?

Decimated Sydney United's fall was predictable, while Gippsland and Canberra have pretty much made going nowhere look easy in the past three or four seasons.

Both clubs have struggled since they joined the comp and will likely to continue to do so in the foreseeable future, although eventually you'd reckon even they will simply tire of turning up to get flogged.

The argument in favor of reducing the number of clubs now further substantiated, those with a fair dinkum concern for the longer term health of the NSL must also consider ensuring some degree of parity and a level playing field for all.

Salary caps and player drafts are generally dismissed as dirty words in soccer circles, but they are the most obvious options until someone offers a more practical solution to a vexing problem.

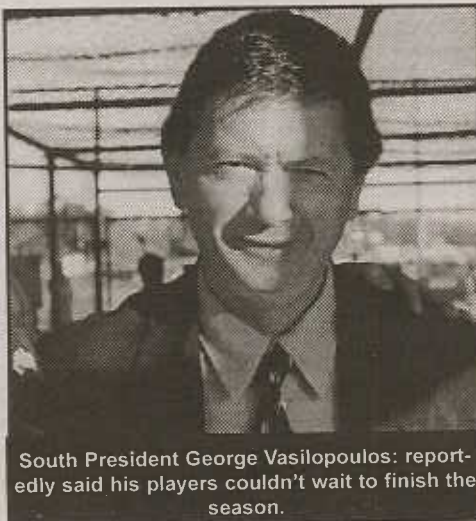
If we are going to go the trouble of a league reformation with a supposedly

elite dozen clubs eventually making cut for season 2001/2002, would it also not be sensible to allow them an decent chance of being competitive?

I like George Vasilopoulos a lot, but sometimes believe he should keep his emotion-charged trap shut.

As the news broke of Michael Curcija signing for Perth Glory last week the long-time South Melbourne president publicly opened both barrels to the media.

"Now I'm beginning to figure out why



South President George Vasilopoulos: reportedly said his players couldn't wait to finish the season.

we didn't succeed this season," he was quoted as saying in the daily press.

"There may have been players with hidden agendas who couldn't wait for the season to finish."

I sincerely hope that George was taken way of context, for implied criticism of Curcija is way out of order.

While other high-profile South Melbourne stars disappeared into limbo around him the big bloke had a stellar career year for South Melbourne and can hold his head high.

The signature of a greatly matured player is producing when it gets tough and in a domestic season which was hugely disappointing for South Melbourne Curcija still rampaged his way to 18 goals and let

no-one down.

The loss of Michael Curcija to Perth Glory might well have at least partially solved a vexing problem for the person eventually charged with the duty of replacing dual-premiership winning coach, Ange Postecoglou, at South Melbourne.

Color Steve Iosifidis as good as gone as well, while at least two other South stars are on rival club hit-lists and there will inevitably be a retirement or two in the close season.

So the question no longer facing the new boss is whether the nucleus of the championship team from '98 and '99 needs a minor quick-fix or a major overhaul.

Just back up the moving vans.

As professionalism increasingly becomes the NSL old guard's version of purgatory, those based east now look west to see the face of the antichrist.

And the face of the beast is the Glory club, the NSL's biggest success story since the show began in 1977 but more recently considered the bar-raising bastards from WA.

His club recently stripped of Perth-bound stars, Michael Curcija and Steve Iosifidis, South Melbourne president, George Vasilopoulos, also offered the thought-provoking possibility of a bleak future for the once traditionally powerhouse domestic clubs.

Vasilopoulos believes the brave new face of the NSL - led by Perth Glory - has initiated a dangerous inflationary cycle which could decimate some of the older clubs.

He says the new fully-professional clubs are driving player salaries rapidly upwards, thus forcing many of the traditional clubs to live well beyond their means to stay competitive.

Perhaps one for Soc.Aus to take a look as we head towards NSL restructuring.

Survival of the fittest is cute in theory, but the danger is that Perth's success could ultimately cripple the rest of the competition.

The only danger for the Perth club is itself.

If current trends continues Glory could actually outgrow the league.

An entire state to themselves, a support base the envy of everyone, blanket local media cover, a bank balance boasting black numerals and blossoming corporate support, Perth has the potential to eventually own the cream of the home-grown talent and dominate the competition like no club has before.

Terrific for the Sandgropers, but a league with such a fragile support base as it is already would eventually die on the vine.

Carlton didn't have a friend in the world between Christmas and March, winning just two from 12 starts and looking for all the world in need of the paramedics.

But I reckon Carlton's season turned around with the return to senior footy of Simon Colosimo, the kid who purrs like a Ferrari.

Colosimo ran off the bench the night Carlton pulled out a big one to beat Perth in Melbourne and from that point his side went on a 6-1-1 run and into the finals on a high.

It can't be complete coincidence that the same Carlton team which had strug-

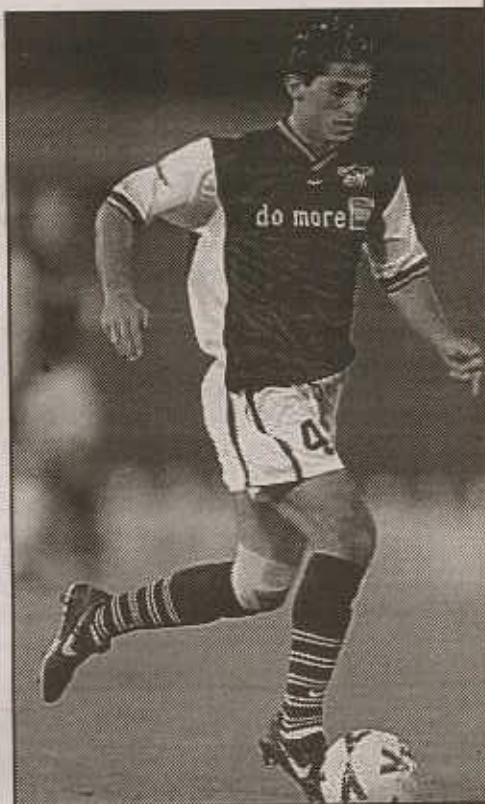


Michael Curcija: South's loss is Glory's gain.

gled to beat its youth team on the training track only weeks before suddenly bounced back to roll the likes of Perth, Olympic and Wollongong once Colosimo was back on board.

The team had found a bit of touch in the couple of weeks prior to his comeback game and Colosimo hasn't been overly flash, but even the kid's mediocre to fair form is enough to give coach Stuart Munro an exceptionally valuable extra option.

And I believe that the mood around the club lifted considerably as 'Super' Simon headed into the final weeks of his comeback from the horrific injury suffered



Simon Colosimo: purrs like a Ferrari.

in a not-so-friendly against a team based somewhere around Lancashire, in the UK.

I believe Marconi is red-hot keen to add the classy thoroughbred to the Stallion stable currently trained by Colosimo's rookie NSL coach at Carlton, 'Smooth' Eddie K, but don't put down your glasses just yet.

I'm not sure what Colosimo's advisors have in mind for him but I understand that other clubs prepared to consider putting quill to parchment with him constitutes a field of several.

Fair enough too, because Colosimo is a dead-set, black book special to strut his exquisite skills on the world stage, probably sooner than later.

Cauldron of fear says Bernd Stange

With the rush for finals tickets well under way, Perth Glory moved on to Australian Rules ground Subiaco Oval for its first taste of the arena in preparation for its finals showdown with Wollongong Wolves.

After a brisk warm-up and a few skills sessions, the players had an improvised game of Aussie Rules with a ball borrowed from on-looker West Coast Eagles players.

Although the kick-around might have been strangely alluring to the scattered Glory supporters who had stumbled upon the session after purchasing their tickets, it was a bizarre experience for some in the squad who were taking on the odd-shaped ball game for the first time. "It's a little bit strange for Aurelio and Edgar Junior from Brazil, and for me as well as Mich D'Avray - we have never seen such a ball," said a bemused Bernd Stange.

The importance of the session for Stange was that his players started to become familiar with the surroundings and the surface, which got a thumbs up from the coach and the players.

"It's great for soccer," Stange said. "I think the groundsman will prepare a good surface."

Stange urged Australian Rules football followers to come out in support of Glory when it takes on Wollongong.

"The Aussies, they should forget for a couple of days football and they should turn to soccer. We will prepare together with our fans a cauldron of fear here in Perth."

It's a sweet feeling for Scott Miller: one of the original Glory boys

By Brett Klucznik

Scott Miller, one of only four Glory players to survive from the side which first took the field for Perth in the NSL, on October 13 1996, said that being crowned minor premiers meant a lot more to him than some of the newer players in the squad.

"Being there from day one, seeing us written off before we even got the chance to play in the NSL, and then four years later with all the supporters, growing in numbers every year, to give them back something like the minor premiership is a really special moment for me."

Bernd Stange praised the younger players in the Glory line-up after the final round win over Northern Spirit. "They did really well with little experience in the N.S.L. - I am proud of them," he said in paying tribute to the likes of Ivan Ergic (19), Dion Valle (22), Ljubo Milicevic (19) and Jamie Harnwell (22).

He was also quick to point out that he was not alone in getting Glory to the top of the N.S.L. heap.

"It's a big success and the result of good teamwork over four years. I'll never forget the first step by Gary Marocchi from amateur soccer to semi-professional soccer and now we are very close to full professional soccer. It's a first step in a short time in the club's history."

NSL general manager Stefan Kamasz said that Glory was arguable the most professional club in the land - and paid tribute to their legion of supporters.

"They are without a doubt the best in the world," he said.

He wasn't the only one to salute the Perth Oval faithful with Graham Arnold saying, "if the Grand Final is in Perth, Glory must be favoured with 40,000 voices behind them."

Meanwhile Glory captain Gareth Naven opted to keep it simple, "Fantastic - keep supporting us, only a few more weeks to go."

The debate over what constitutes a championship winning side in Australia is still raging on, particularly now with a foreign coach winning the minor premiership.

"For me personally, the next four weeks are not necessary," Bernd Stange said.

"At the end of the season, the champion is the champion. Now it's a little bit lottery."

With Glory the most consistent side in the competition over the past seven months, the Stange believes that there are too many outside influences which could now decide the championship including "the referee, injuries, suspension - so many factors - bad luck, rain, thunderstorms."

Arnold concurred, saying: "I agree totally. If you play 34 games and you're on top of the ladder after 34 games, you're the most consistent side in the league so it should be over."

Former Socceroo Robbie Slater said he expected Glory to go on and be



Scott Miller: one of the original players at Perth from their inaugural 1996 season. Four years later they are crowned minor premier.

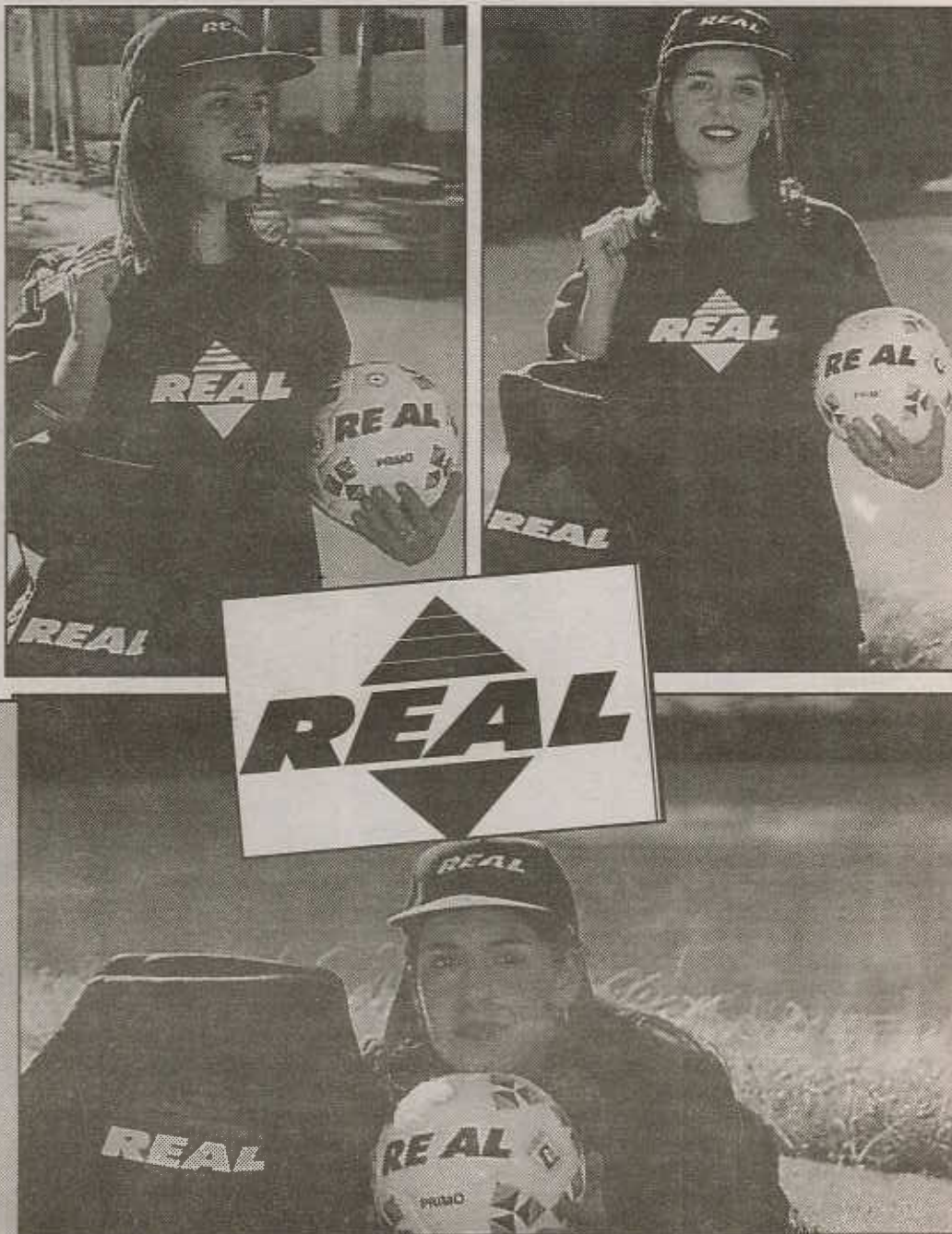
crowned champions in front of a full house at Subiaco Oval on June 11.

"Over 34 games they've finished top of the pile and for me they are the best team in the country," he said before adding "[But] we're in Australia and the big one is the Grand Final."

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The Great Gazza Media Beat-Up!

By Brett Klucznik

Reports emanating from the west late last week claimed that former England international Paul Gascoigne was heading to Perth in late June for two guest appearances with E.C.U. Joondalup. But less than 12 hours after the story broke, the midfielder's English club Middlesbrough poured cold water on the loan deal.

In a career that has seen the midfielder play for some of the biggest clubs in Europe, it was claimed that Gascoigne would fly to Australia at the end of the month to spend the summer in Perth on loan with state league side Joondalup.

Gary Williams of World Sports Management said Middlesbrough had agreed the deal with the State League club in the hope that a change of scenery will help 32-year-old bounce back from a miserable season.

It was believed that Joondalup would pay Gascoigne's living expenses while in W.A. with the Premier League outfit picking up his wages of more than \$34,500 a week.

Joondalup coach Paul Simmons (also a Geordie) was confident the midfielder will play for his club. "We are still sorting out the contract details," he said. "We are towards the end of negotiations. How big is this for Australian soccer? One of the biggest names in the world game is coming to play for the Western Australian State champions ... you bring a guy like Gascoigne over Western Australia and he'll be the biggest player to have graced these shores, not just of

Western Australia but Australia in general ... Our football is heading in the right direction and it helps bringing over big names."

Simmons said Joondalup had been able to get Gascoigne to the negotiating table through former Sheffield Wednesday, Everton player Mick Lyons, who is the Director of Coaching at the club's Youth Development Academy (and ex Canberra Cosmos coach.)

With Gascoigne known to be a keen angler, Joondalup looked to have beaten off interest from the United States as well as several other Australian sides with the tempting offer of some of the best fishing in the world.

The club are banking on Gazza's pulling power to cover their investment and will make the transition easier by reuniting him with his old Tottenham and England team-mate Chris Waddle who has been confirmed to play a number of games for the Perth side.

But Gascoigne's adviser in the UK Mel Stein described the move as "premature," which appeared to be spot on.

"There is a bit of smoke but no fire. There has been an initial approach but no one has spoken to me. For anything to occur three things have to happen. Middlesbrough have to agree to any move, Paul has to agree to go and I have to be contacted about terms. That has not happened."

Stein, speaking on Sky Sports.com, added: "I am amazed. All I know is there has been an indication and we have heard on the grapevine about this but it is absolutely premature. Paul has a holiday lined up but that is the same for any other

Premiership player.

"At the end of the day Paul is a player with Middlesbrough, they pay his wages. It is all racing ahead of itself. I have never spoken to anyone from Joondalup."

Middlesbrough boss Bryan Robson has described the deal as "way over the top speculation."

Having viewed the television interview with Joondalup officials he said: "I was amazed and surprised when I watched the television interview today. The quotes from the Joondalup manager were astonishing. No agreement has been reached with any club over a loan move for Gazza."

"After next week I will sit down with him and decide whether he should play football abroad or stay with us to build up his fitness."

Should the deal proceed as hoped and Gazza does make his way to Perth, it wouldn't be the first time that the city has seen some of the world's greats playing in the local League.

England's World Cup winning captain Bobby Moore spent time with Inglewood Kiev in the early 1980's and following in his footsteps were Bobby Charlton (Perth Azzurri), Alan Ball (Floreat



E.C.U. Joondalup thought all their Christmases had come at once with Geordie pair Gascoigne (right) and Waddle coming out to play guest games. The story appears a little premature at this point.

Athena), Trevor Brooking (Kilmarnock), George Best (Osborne Park), Mike Channon (Gosnells City) and Jimmy Case (Waneroo British) make appearances in Perth.

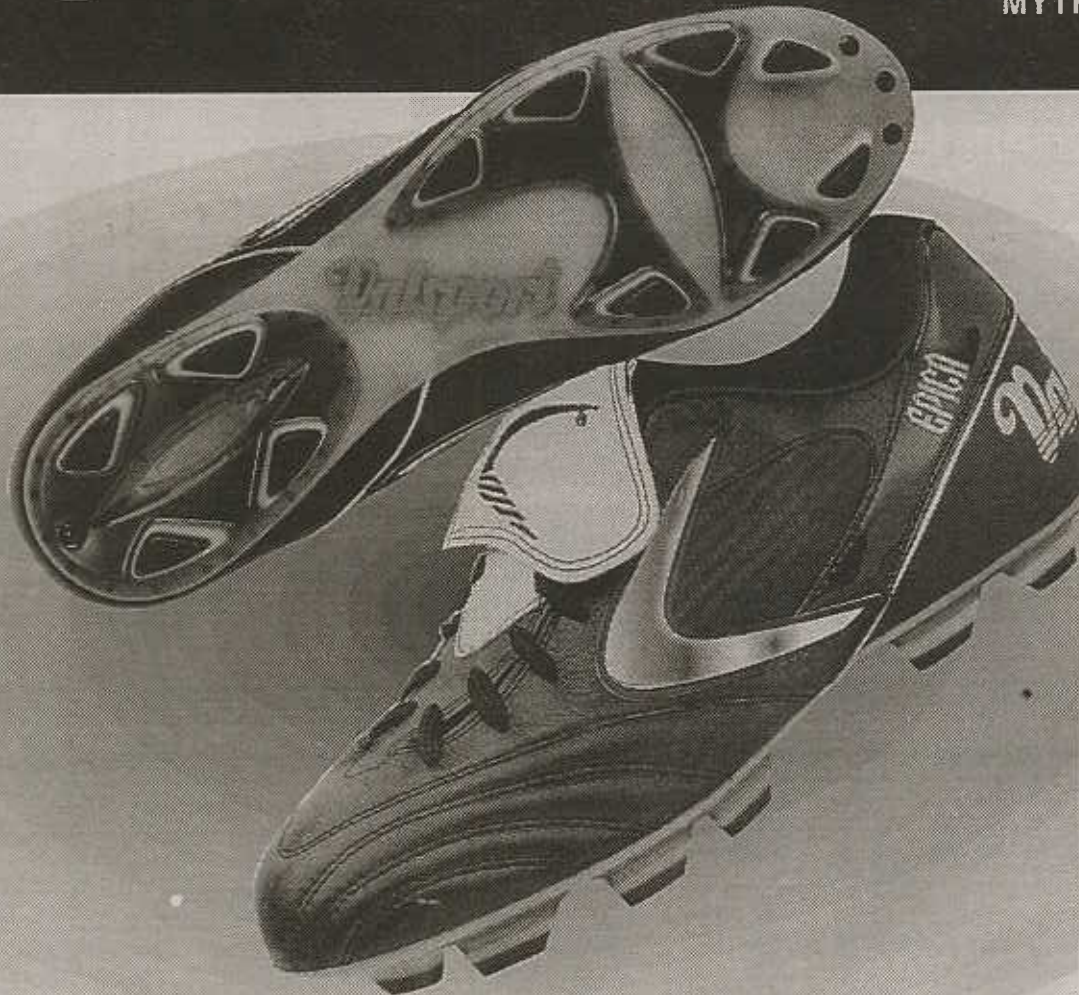
Gascoigne has kept a low profile since breaking his arm against Aston Villa in mid-February. He was immediately taken to hospital amid fears that his playing time in the Premier League was over, concerns that were heightened when a succession of injuries hampered hopes of an early return.

Both Boro and Gascoigne feel it is in his best interests to escape from the glare of the English scene in an attempt to repair a career which has looked in terminal decline.

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Ali Forman: Fighting for Matildas glory

By Aidan Ormond

At 31 Matildas captain Alison Forman is looking towards the next World Cup - quite possibly in Australia - as being her swansong on the international stage after playing in the previous two World Cups, yet like most football-obsessed players her desire for the sport is such that she never wants to stop because, as she says, "I love every game and want always to be able to play."

Certainly her form in the Australia Cup in January (her goal against the US was a cracker) would suggest these will be her best years, which is good news for coach Chris Tanzey (below) in the lead-up to the naming of his Olympic squad on June 18.

"I think since the Australia Cup in January we have come a long way," Forman, who has 56 caps and six goals for Australia, explained. "Particularly in

the last couple of months the side has sharpened up and gotten a lot stronger because we are not only training six days a week, but playing mens sides who are very fast and physical."

The Matildas have been playing mens U/16 and senior sides. Previously they were pitting themselves against over 35 mens selections in their training games.

Forman, from Maitland in NNSW, also rejects the idea that the six days a week program at the AIS leads to fatigue and staleness within the squad.

"No, we are trying to catch up on the years that we did not have the AIS. You get the unity and of course at the end of the day soccer is a team game."

Forman, a full-time resident scholarship holder at the AIS, also works 15 hours per week on site at the AIS as a delivery person. "It gets me away from soccer and we talk and laugh about things outside of soccer."

Asked about the Matildas' style and Forman says it is not a rigid team system that Tanzey has them playing.

"Although we play 4-4-2 we aren't really into systems, it's pretty fluid so we can change as we need out on the park. That's something Chris Tanzey has been working on. I think you'll see in the Pacific Cup tournament the Matildas getting closer to the USA and China and putting in a very strong effort."

The USA have announced their squad for the tour, and it includes big names such as Mia Hamm (below), Chastain, Foudy, Scurry and Milbrett.



Alison Forman after the Sweden game earlier this year.

girls in the squad. Also some of the players in the Matildas have played overseas - I played in Denmark for instance - so we also know about full-time soccer, hopefully this will be a positive for the younger girls."

Forman has played seven seasons for Danish side Fortuna Hjørring and was the first foreign player to rack up 100 games.

"Probably there are four or five older players like myself and the rest are pretty young in our current squad ... they will put in a good show. There are also players in our U/17 team that show a lot of future promise, such as Vozzo, Stocco and Neilson," she added.

These stars of the future will be playing in the Adidas Cup in Houston, Texas while the Matildas have their Pacific Cup commitments.

Yet to improve at national level it's a vicious circle. More games costs money, but Australia won't become a top three nation, and therefore gain a better financial base, without more games.

Needless to say the highly successful USA (the World Cup and Olympic champions) are playing games practically once a week as they swing through the US and Scandinavia with Australia sandwiched in between.

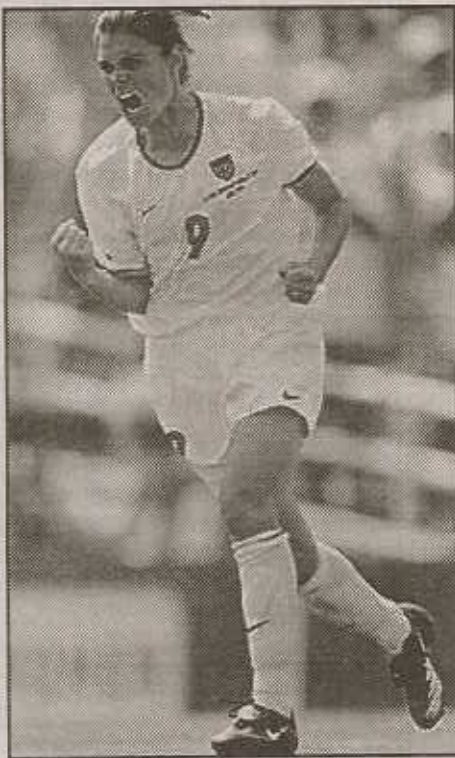
"Obviously it's easier for the US to play more games because they have the funding," said Forman, who survives on a modest government subsidy.

To that end, the AWSA has, together with the players, orchestrated two highly successful PR projects in the last six months: the nude calendar and the TV commercial for toothpaste (shown in Japan only). These are ventures Forman feels good about.

"Yeah I have no problems with the media stuff at all ... I guess because I love the sport and have given so many years to it. I look towards the future so maybe some of the next generation can have a higher profile in the sport."

"We were just thinking the other day that people will probably look back at this time and say we were the pioneers."

Alison Forman may not have made much money from soccer, but she will go down as one of the most committed players in the national team and an ideal spokeswoman for the code in the new millennium.



New star Danielle Slaton (who played in the Australia Cup) has also been selected. The US arrives on Thursday May 25 and will be involved in the Olympic draw ceremony on June 3 at Sydney's Town Hall.

Matildas' coach Tanzey and assistant Ian Murray have said in the past they want to instill a long-term structure into the women's game here. They are also hardened UK professionals who live and breathe the game.

"Yeah, I think 'Tanz' (Chris Tanzey) and his attitude has rubbed off on the



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Pacific Cup Itinerary

ROUND ONE - CANBERRA

WEDNESDAY 31 MAY 2000

AIS Athletics Arena

2.00 pm Canada v N Zealand

Bruce Stadium

5.00 pm USA v China

7.30 pm Australia v Japan

ROUND TWO - SYDNEY

FRIDAY 2 JUNE 2000

Sydney Football Stadium

3.00 pm Japan v New Zealand

5.30 pm USA v Canada

8.00 pm Australia v China

ROUND THREE - CAMPBELLTOWN.

SUNDAY 4 JUNE 2000

Campbelltown Sports Stadium, Sydney

12.00 pm Japan v China

2.30 pm USA v New Zealand

5.00 pm Australia v Canada

ROUND FOUR - NEWCASTLE

WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2000

Hunter Athletics Centre, Newcastle

3.00 pm Australia v New Zealand

THURSDAY 8 JUNE 2000

Breakers Stadium

3.30 pm China v Canada

6.00 pm USA v Japan

ROUND FIVE - NEWCASTLE

SATURDAY 10 JUNE 2000

Hunter Athletics Centre, Newcastle

12.00 pm Canada v Japan

2.30 pm China v New Zealand

SUNDAY 11 JUNE 2000

Breakers Stadium

3.30 pm Australia v USA

AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

Gareth Edds impressing Platt at Nottingham Forest

Taking an avid interest in the recent German Cup Final between Bayern Munich and Werder Bremen was Bremen youngster, and one of the stars of the LG Joeys performance at the FIFA Under-17 World Championship in New Zealand last year, Joe Di Iorio.

Soccer Australia recently spoke to the 18 year old (pictured right) who has been with the Club for almost two years, and has gradually worked his way through the ranks of the Under-18s to the Reserves, with his sights set firmly on a berth in the first team squad.

While that may be a little while away yet, Di Iorio is busy planning his future, with thoughts of his own appearance in a future Cup final well and truly in mind.

"Unfortunately, I didn't have the chance to get to Berlin to watch the Final live, but as a player with the club, it was almost as intense watching it on TV," said the former LG Joey, 24 hours after Werder Bremen's 3-0 defeat.

"Obviously it was a very disappointing result from my point of view, nobody likes to lose, especially not a Final, and this is almost twice in a year for me, but on the other hand, at least we were there."

"The atmosphere around the Club in the build-up was electric, everyone was very excited, the senior team left for Berlin almost a week before the Cup, very confident that we could take it out two years in a row, but Bayern was always going to be a tough challenge."

"In the end the result didn't go our way, but even so, right through the game you're sitting there watching it, and thinking that could be me, that's what I'm aiming for, that's my goal."

The youngster, who recently toured Australia with the Werder Bremen Under-18s before being called back for the Reserves side, has had little difficulty settling into Germany, despite a move at 17 to a totally foreign country.

"When I first got here, I thought to myself, how was I going to learn this language, it was basically the first time I'd heard German."

"It took me about a year to pick it up, though I was helped through last season by a Nigerian team-mate who spoke both English and German so he was translating everything for me."

This year I can understand almost everything though, I'm pretty fluent, which makes it three languages for me, which is pretty useful in Europe.

"As one of the foreigners, I actually live in the Stadium, on the fifth floor, so I haven't got any excuses for getting to training late, and I hope to be moving into one of the 'reserve' rooms in July, they're for the reserve grade players and come with their own kitchens, which means I'll be calling my mother for a little help."

Right now, it may be a matter of going through the ranks with his Club side, but the last 12 months have been big ones for Di Iorio.

In July he was part of the Werder Bremen Under-18 side which took out the German Cup, and in November, he was part of the LG Joeys squad which created Australian soccer history by taking the silver medal at the FIFA Under-17 World Championship.

Both events have made their mark on the young Victorian, and both have given him the impetus to continue his push forward.

"Winning the German Cup last season in July against Stuttgart definitely stands out as one of my best experiences so far. We won 4-1, I scored one, got a penalty, and set up the fourth goal, so yes, it would have to be right up there."

"But the Under-17s Final is also something that's always on my mind, you think about New Zealand and the lead-up games, you think about the Final against Brazil, you think about the chance that you had, and what if."

"We had a really good team, and hopefully we can go through the ranks together, accumulating the experiences of those who play in Europe, and those who play in Australia, it can only be good for Australian soccer."

Di Iorio is aware that many of his Under-17 team-mates are currently trialling, and securing Clubs within Europe, and his words of advice are simple.

"You need to set a goal, and you need to stick to it, to never lose sight of it. I always wanted to make it as a professional footballer and play overseas, and hopefully I'm on my way to doing just that."

Nottingham Forest's latest youth star, Australian Gareth Edds, told a local media outlet how the season has ended too soon for him. The 19 year old impressed in the final two games of the season and has put himself firmly in manager David Platt's plans for next season.

Edds is the latest player to make a successful foray into first-team football out of Paul Hart's Youth Academy.

And he was instrumental in Forest's 3-2 victory over Stockport County, setting up the decisive third goal.

"It has been great getting into the team in the last few weeks and it was wonderful to play a part in the third goal," he explained.

"I just wish there were a few more games left in the season so I could carry on playing."

"Whether I figure in the team next season will be up to the manager but I will be working as hard as I can."

Edds got his chance with Jim Brennan away on international duty and he made few mistakes in both games.

Manager Platt was impressed with his new full-back who he tipped to be a future star.

"He has performed well when he was put into the team but what he needs to do is find the consistency," he said.

"What Gareth, and the other youngsters who are coming through, give us is extra competition for places."

"He is another name to add to the squad, meaning that the more experienced players cannot allow their games to drop."

Edds will almost certainly travel with the academy on their trip to Switzerland in the summer and he will be hoping to continue his progress there.

Celtic's Australian striker Mark Viduka collected another award last week.

Viduka finished third in soccer journalists' Scottish Footballer of the Year award.

In the previous week Viduka won the Scottish Players' Player of the Year award.

Viduka finished off the season with an injury and was absent from Celtic's 0-0 away draw with St Johnstone on the weekend.

Tony Vidmar played a full game for Rangers as they continued their championship celebration with a 1-0 win over Hearts. Craig Moore is still recuperating from his knee operation.

In the English lower division play-offs the two teams involved that feature Australians will have a difficult time to



progress to the next stage after the first legs.

Stan Lazaridis played a full game in Birmingham's 0-4 home drubbing at the hands of Barnsley and it is unlikely that he will be matching wits with Premier League defenders next season.

Lucas Neill and Tim Cahill both played a full game in Millwall's 0-0 home draw with Wigan in a Division Two play-off game. And although both Aussies were prominent in the game Wigan will be favoured to advance to the next stage when they play at home in the second leg.

In the other game in Division Two Steve Mautone remained on the bench as Gillingham lost 3-2 away to Stoke.

In the weekend Premier League games Mark Schwarzer and Harry Kewell were the only Aussies involved in the final weekend of the season. Both played full games with Kewell's Leeds United team securing a Champions Cup berth for next season after Liverpool was beaten by Bradford.

In the German Bundesliga David Zdrilic continued his superb end to the season. After a long lay off with injury Zdrilic returned to the first team roster of SSV Ulm only recently and after scoring twice last week he was on the scoreboard again as Ulm beat Wolfsburg 2-0. He played a full game and scored his goal in the 9th minute.

In the battle for the fourth spot 1860 Munchen beat Hertha Berlin 2-1 with both Aussies, Ned Zelic and Paul Agostino, playing a full game.

In Holland, Zeljko Kalac played a full game as Roda JC beat AZ Alkmaar 3-2 before a hasty exit from Holland to take part in Sydney United's golf day (see S-News).

Paul Okon probably played(!) his last game for Fiorentina as they won 3-0 at home. But unfortunately for Okon he remained on the bench as he has through most of the season.

In Croatia Ante Milicic came on in the 86th minute as Rijeka won 1-0 at home to secure the final European spot as the win puts them in fourth spot ahead of Slaven Belupo on goal difference.

Tony Grdic played a full game for Hajduk Split in the last match of the season which saw them finish in second spot behind Dinamo and a spot in the Champions Cup.

Aussies in Asia

By Scott O'Donnell in Singapore

Darren Stewart's team Balestier Central remain firmly entrenched at the foot of the table after going down 4 - 1 to Tanjong Pagar. Balestier, who are operating on a comparatively small budget this year are finding it increasingly difficult to get their first win of the season.

With only one more round to go until the half-way mark, there is every likelihood that Balestier will have played 11 games for one draw and 10 losses. Not a very impressive statistic.

There is an opportunity after Round 11 for clubs to change two foreign players and two local players. Whether Balestier have the funds to make the changes remains to be seen.

In fairness to Stewart and their other foreigners, there is not much more they can do. They are playing with a lot of young, inexperienced players who try very hard but cannot perform consistently.

Alan Vest's Geylang United got back to winning ways with a hard fought 1 - 0 victory over Tampines.

Former Gippsland Falcons striker, Brian Bothwell scored their only goal with a well taken shot from the edge of the penalty area. The win keeps Geylang in touch with the leaders.

Marine Castle threw away the lead twice to go down to Jurong 3 - 2. Marine Castle, who have Perth duo Anthony Carbone and Michael Garcia in their squad could not break their hoodoo at Jurong East Stadium.

Mirko Jurilj's Sembawang Rangers snatched a last minute equaliser to hold current champions, Home United to a 1 - 1 draw.

Home took the lead through former Socceroo Ernie Tapai and looked to have the match sewn up until the 90th minute when Sembawang scored their equaliser.

Tapai, playing with his hamstring heavily strapped, was influential throughout the game and earned glowing praise from his Dutch coach Robert Alberts after the match.

In other matches, current league leaders SAFFC won 2 - 1 at home to Gombak, while Woodlands defeated Clementi 3 - 0.

King of Pain: Stergiboy's year in NZ

By Aidan Ormond

If you were in the Victorian country town of Sale last weekend you may have seen him? The town's favourite international footballing son riding around on his bicycle, jet-skiing at the local river or just taking his family out.

The Football Kingz' Marcus Stergiopoulos - Stergiboy to all and sundry - is back in his home town after 12 months in Auckland following the side's eighth placing in their first NSL year.

With a pause for reflection he describes the last year, with an ironic chuckle, as "an adventure".

Stergiopoulos, 25, changed his contract from two years to one at the start of the season, a move which turned out to be one of the best he made.

Put it this way, if he had his time again he would not have signed with the club, despite making numerous friends in Auckland and enjoying fans that he says were "absolutely fantastic."

Stergiopoulos announced his departure from the Kingz on the microphone at North Harbour Stadium in front of 5,000 fans after the club's final home game against Brisbane Strikers. It was something coach Wynton Rufer did not appreciate, but as the player says, "it was my only chance to publicly thank them because I had made my decision, or rather the Rufers had made the decision for me, a month earlier."

Stergiopoulos arrived last season as one of the more experienced and high profile players signings by Wynton Rufer, having played at Bradford City, Gippsland and Carlton, where he scored in the 1998 Grand Final.

"Look it was exciting when I was offered the contract," says the voluble Stergiopoulos. "The expectations were pretty high, I was sort of expecting a Perth Glory type of situation. You see, I trust a lot of people so when things don't end up that way it's pretty disappointing."

"Basically they were promising a few things but in the end it didn't happen," he says.

Problems began early with the pre-season preparations which officially began on 27 August. "We had to jam in three months of pre-season into five weeks!" he explains.

"Plus the Kiwi players had two weeks off after their excellent showing at the Confederations Cup, so we really did not get the squad together properly at all."

"And we were signing players right on the start of the season, such as Che Bunce and Lev Osman."

"There was no recovery time in that five weeks, we were exhausted and our immune systems were low so we were always catching colds. It was too much."

"Having said that I'm sure that if the Rufers had their way they would not have had this type of pre-season, which was forced on us by the late decision by FIFA to include us in the league."

Stergiopoulos however was less

than complimentary about the Rufers and their approach to man-managing their squad. In short, the Kiwi brothers' constant selection changes, he feels, was the reason why the Kingz were so inconsistent.

Finishing on 50 points, and in eighth position, was a much better finish than most expected. Yet Stergiopoulos is convinced that the Kingz could have been top six material.

"As a player you have to respect what Wynton has done as a player. Both Shane and Wynton are nice people but it's their communication that seems to be the problem."

"The reason why we didn't make the play-offs was because they continually were changing the team ... they said they would change the team just 'to see the player's reaction.'"

"They are messing with your mind with this reverse psychology. It's crazy."

"After the first game of the season, at home to Carlton, I went to Wynton and asked him what do I have to work on as I was not happy with my performance in centre midfield. He said don't worry in the next game you'll have a chance to redeem yourself. At Sydney United in round two I was put on the bench even though he said I was in earlier."

"So for four weeks I was on the

Stergiopoulos recalls one pre-match speech when Shane Rufer said the team had to take out their violins from their cases and mow down the opposition! "I almost burst out laughing," he says.

bench. I went to him and asked what I needed to work on but he couldn't tell me. He just told me to not worry there were plenty of games."

"I got back into the team on Jan 3 when Wynton was away on FIFA duty, then Shane dropped me from the squad. One of the senior players asked him why and he said again, 'I want to see his reaction.'"

"I did not know whether I was Harry or Barry! with all this changing around."

"I then played and was dropped again against Marconi. And it was not just me, he was chopping and changing other players too. You didn't know where you stood and they weren't communicating the reasons why."

"We were an inconsistent side because the selections were so inconsistent. How can you play well when it is playing on your mind that you may be dropped for no reason?"

"With the selections for the last game of the season Wynton said because we couldn't make the finals he was going to give some other players a go, it was a matter of eeny meeny miney mo! So I told him, who am I, f— mo?"

"If only the Rufers could get their man-management right, they would get a lot more respect."



Stergiopoulos (extreme left) with from L to R: Ngata, W. Rufer, Vicelich and Batty.

found out later, says the left wing-back, Wynton used the same line on me that he used with the others. He said 'one good season under me and I'll get you to Germany.' I was too embarrassed to say he had said this to me too, but he did."

"Wynton even said I was in contention for player of the year! I felt like saying well that's strange considering I've not played many games."

Stergiopoulos recalls one pre-match speech when Shane Rufer said the team had to take out their violins from their cases and mow down the opposition! "I almost burst out laughing," he says.

"As coaches I don't rate the Rufers. I look at Eddie Krncevic and Frank Arok and they are the two best coaches I've had."

"I lived in the same apartment block as some of the Warriors Rugby League side, and they couldn't believe it. They said if their coach dropped a player, they would be told privately during the week."

Stergiopoulos also says SKY TV, now an 80% owner of the Kingz, wanted to use himself as the public face of the side, with an on-air presenting job thrown in.

"I've spoken to a few Aussies players and have told them that the club is fantastic, particularly with the SKY deal. Now. However with the inconsistent chopping and changing by the coaches, the Rufers aren't the ones for you."

There appeared to be an 'us and them' mentality developing in the side. "Wynton even said to us once: 'don't talk to them (the Chileans). Make them feel they are not wanted.'"

The move was difficult also on a personal level. Stergiopoulos' partner Janene left her job and friends to be with him.

"She is an amazing woman ... the best," he says, the emotion choking him up. "She packed up her life to come with me. It was hard for her. I'd come home and she'd be crying on the couch. We battled through it. Without her I would have gone insane. It wasn't easy for her."

Stergiopoulos also claimed that

a wife of one of the Kingz was set on splitting the friendships of the partners of the three Aussie players, Stergiopoulos, Middleby and Mennillo.

"It caused huge problems. This came out in November. It was so messy. Consequently none of the girls were talking. It wasn't until the last game of the season that they realized what had happened."

Dino Mennillo's departure may have also been something to do with these problems.

At the moment rest is on Stergiopoulos' agenda, some agents have trials arranged overseas and there are Australian clubs interested too.

He might even watch the odd soap opera or two. It may remind him of his year in New Zealand.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"I'm like a fine wine, I get better as I get older."

Matildas skipper Alison Foman.

"We will build a cauldron of fear"

Glory coach Bernd Stange on the gladiatorial features a 43,000 crowd at Subiaco Oval will have.

"I know their weaknesses."

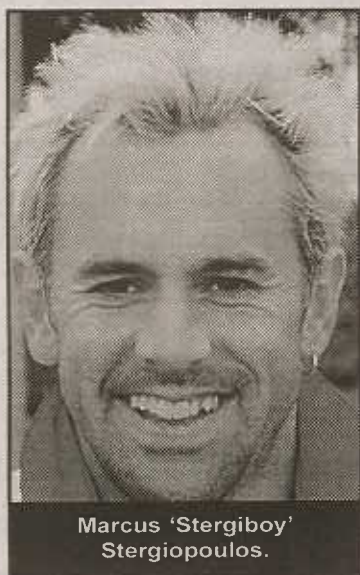
Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic on Carlton prior to the first leg Elimination Final.

"Were they the weaknesses he saw when we beat them 4-0 at Marconi?"

Carlton coach Stu Munro responds. You just know it's finals time when the war of words starts.

"No-one washes dishes like me"

Adelaide City keeper Adrian Cagali from next week's interview with Daniela Raco.



Marcus 'Stergiboy' Stergiopoulos.

Hayden Foxe answers the hard questions!

Soccer Australia are conducting interviews with the Olyroos. This one is with the inspirational Hayden Foxe.

You are a bit of an unknown quantity as far as many Australian sports fans are concerned - so WHO IS HAYDEN FOXE?

Mmm .. who am I .. oh God, who thinks up these questions .. well, I'm a very easy going kind of guy that gets along with everyone, and I'm someone who loves playing for his country, I really don't think there's anything better than playing for your country. I'm also very much a "one of the lads" kind of person, I love to get together with the boys, and I think that team bonding is very important both on and off the field.

What kind of public recognition do you get in Japan ... and in Australia?

Well, I'm 6'4" and I've got red hair, and I'm surrounded by people who are 5'4" with jet black hair, so I don't stand out, not a bit. No really, obviously I'm easily recognized in Japan, which can be a good thing or a bad thing, depending on whether the team is doing well ... at least the pressure is a little easier than if you were playing in Europe, but they pressure you all the same. I am recognized as a footballer in Hiroshima, probably more so than I am in Australia, and while the ginger hair does tend to stand out a bit even here, at least I can go to a sporting event and not be recognized, while that's not possible in Japan.

How do you think Sydney 2000 could change your life ... and the profile of Australian Soccer?

That's easy, because it will be an experience that I'll never experience again. Playing for Australia is one thing, playing for Australia in Australia is another, but playing for Australia, in Australia, at the Olympics - well, it can't get better, can it? I mean, if that's not enough to give you goose bumps, then I don't know what is ... well, that's until I get married I suppose! Obviously if we do well, then it's going to lift the profile of the sport overall, because people are going to sit up and take notice, but I think that's starting to happen even now, with so many good players playing abroad, Australia is not regarded as an easy opponent anymore, we're seen as a very competitive opponent and if we do well at the Olympics, it's just going to get bigger and better.

With the final squad of 18 to be named in around 3 months is the pressure starting to show within the Squad?

I'm the type of person who will try to keep as calm possible in these situations, but in the end, positions are at stake, and I'd really hate to be in Raul's (Blanco) position - we have so many good players in the squad, many of whom are going for the same position, and in the end, there will be some really good players who will miss out - so yes, it's going to be tough - but having said that, that's life, we all have to get on with the job at hand, and continue playing and striving for the next goal. The important thing to remember though, is that everyone who's been part of the squad over the past 3 years has had something to do with its success. While the final squad will be 18 players, there are more than 30 players who should remember that they had something to do with the overall success, that they played as part of the team, that they trained as part of the team, and that they helped to get the team to where it is today - and as far as anyone is concerned, will always be a part of it.

What motivates you?



Success - the joy of doing something really well, which leads me to do it again and again.

Being very much "by yourself" in Japan is there someone who helps you, particularly mentally, cope with the mounting pressure of trying to secure a spot in the LG Under-23 Squad.

Definitely (LG Soccerroo & Sanfrecece team-mate) Tony Popovic. Popa is an absolute champion. He's not only a good team-mate, but a really good friend, and he's helped me so much in my last 2 years in Japan, not only on the pitch but off it as well. He's passed a lot of his experience, both as a Club player and a National Team player onto me, and in turn, I hope that I can pass that experience onto the younger guys in the Olympic team. Basically, I can't say enough good words about him, nothing phases him and I respect him so very much.

How would you describe yourself as a player, and where (and why) do you fit into the LG U-23 squad?

I'm tall, they usually put me in the back somewhere and they tell me to go out and play. OK, the real answer .. for the Olympic team at the moment, I feel I can bring in a bit of experience as I've played in the Senior National Team for the last 18 months or so, and I was also a member of the last Olympic team, so I know what it's about. So yes, the experience and the advice that I've gained from other senior players ... Aurelio Vidmar, Tony Popovic, Paul Okon and the like, well, I'd like to give that back to this team, and I hope that I can.

What kind of encouragement and support do you get from your family?

My family supports me 100% , not just in soccer, but in all walks of life. I'm the youngest in the family, but I've never gotten away with too much, instead they encourage me to be myself, and to stay humble, and think I've done that - the lesson is never forget where you've come from, and you do never forget.

Is there any particular team that you are looking forward to facing at the Olympic Games, and why?

I'm looking forward to playing all of them. I'm very excited about playing at home in front of the crowds, so who we play is maybe not so important ... as long as everyone is behind us, then we can take it step by step, game by game and go from there.

Amaglug-glug threat to Kiwis' Olympic hopes!

This Friday it's the big Olympic qualifier in New Zealand between the home side and South Africa, a side with stars such as Benny McCarthy and Quinten Fortune (pictured below).

The first leg is to be played at Albany's North Harbour Stadium on this Friday while the return match is scheduled for the 27th, possibly at Vosloorus.

Mike Utting, keeper for the All-Whites senior team and former Kingz keeper, described the 16-man squad in the South African press as "a good one" and singled out the striking pair of Kris Bouckenhooze and Paul Urlovic as the main dangers.

He said Matthew Booth's Amaglug-glug (the unforgettable nickname for the South African Olympic team; their national side is called 'Bafana Bafana') will have to keep an eye on the duo.

"I think South Africa will have a much stronger squad," he said.

"But Urlovic and Bouckenhooze are good strikers who South Africa will have to watch very carefully if they are to win."

Bouckenhooze, whom Utting described as "a quick, intelligent striker," plays for Belgian side SK Roeselare while Urlovic turns out for Melbourne Knights.

Urlovic also plays for the senior national team as does the US-based captain and central defender Ryan Nelsen, who also rated a special mention from Utting: "He is a good defender who reads the game very well and is a good leader too."

Just like their opponents, who will announce their squad this week, New Zealand face the dilemma of securing the services of their overseas-based players.

Ken Dugdale, the coach of the All Whites, is now waiting and hoping that those he has chosen will turn up. Half the squad are playing overseas and Dugdale is aware there could be hitches before the first leg: "There are no problems that I am aware of, but some clubs are better than others in letting us know when players will be released," Dugdale



Paul Urlovic: the Kiwi has been scoring regularly with Melbourne Knights.

said to the paper.

"When you pick overseas-based players you accept that they have club commitments and we are only able to claim them four days before a game."

The All Whites will assemble on May 15.

NEW ZEALAND SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Chris Marsh (Dunedin Technical), Robbie Barraclough (Nelson Suburbs)

Defenders: John Foundoulakis (Prootheftiki - Greece), Ryan Nelsen (captain, Stanford University - USA), Gareth Rowe (Central Utd), Joshua Stick (Central Utd), Graham Pearce (University/Mt Wellington)

Midfielders: Jeff Campbell (Football Kingz), Gerard Davis

(Stanford University - USA), Raffaele De Gregorio (Dordrecht - Holland), Noah Hickey (Football Kingz), Bradley Scott (Central Utd), Blair Scoullar (Dunedin Technical), Mathew Urlovic (St Albans Saints - Melbourne)

Strikers: Campbell Banks (Central Utd), Kris Bouckenhooze (SK Roeselare Belgium), Chris Killen (Manchester City - England), Paul Urlovic (Melbourne Knights - Melbourne).



Quinten Fortune from the Amaglug-glug.

INSIDE SOCCER LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Please keep letter to under 300 words.

The world according to Walter



So, what are some of Parramatta Power midfielder Walter Ardone's off-field pastimes?

I love to read - at the moment I'm reading a book titled 'How to know God'. If I have some spare time I usually get down to the beach, or gym, or walk the dog.

Were you always a naturally gifted soccer player, or did you receive a rather informal soccer education that began by playing in the streets or on a concrete car park with a couple of mates?

No, I was pretty talented. As a youngster at seven year of age I was playing by myself in the backyard. I turned professional at sixteen.

Over the years I have seen the Ardone talent on show at numerous clubs including Parramatta Eagles, Heidelberg United, Sydney United, Sydney Olympic, and currently Parramatta Power. Yet, I wait for the day that a coach makes you cut your hair!

It has already happened under Rale Rasic. But, when I did cut my hair I lost confidence and wasn't the same player.

A few years ago you spent some time in Melbourne playing for the struggling Heidelberg United. How would you describe the city I was born and raised in?

I love Melbourne. I spend a lot of time down Chapel Street enjoying the scenery.

You have an acting agent, and seem keen to carve out your name in the modeling world. With your good looks you should have polled in the recent 'Cleo 50 most eligible bachelor list' (former teammate Ivan Zelic was nominated.)

One soccer player is enough! I recall an air-conditioning commercial you were part during France '98. Is this something you would rather forget, or do you still have video nights with friends where you 'accidentally' pop on the tape?

No, I haven't got any copies. Friends have, so I'm sure I can always borrow their's.

What is it about soccer that you love the most?

The camaraderie between teammates, and playing with friends. Then, watching these same friends achieve their dreams and goals and being part of it.

At the same time I enjoy setting up goals, and celebrating a win after a game. What are some of your short and long term goals?

To continue playing for Parramatta Power, and win a championship before I retire.

Do you have aspirations to break into European football?

Definitely. Any player that is playing would love to play in the bigger leagues to enhance their career.

What are the qualities of a good coach?

To be able to listen to players, to communicate, and encourage. Also to be an ex-player.

Which famous person have you been told you look like?

The guy from 'The Doors' - Jim Morrison.

If you could have box seats at any event in the world, what would it be?

Front row seats at the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Calendar launch.

If you were to star in a Hollywood movie who would be your leading

lady?

Angelina Jolie.

Which member of your squad is most likely to be caught dancing on a nightclub?

There was an incident where Danny Townsend slipped off a podium at a nightclub.

What is the best (or perhaps worst) excuse you've heard someone use for missing training?

Training was scheduled at 8.00am, but I could have sworn it was at 12.00 noon.

On interstate trips which teammate do you refuse to share a room with?

Steve Berry, because he snores.

Who has the most unusual nickname in the team?

Danny Townsend, 'Bevis', because he looks like the guy from the movie. Steve Eagleton, 'Woof', because every time he gets the ball he 'woofs' it.

Have you experienced any embarrassing moments on the field?

Yes, a couple of weeks back against Northern Spirit I went to take a corner and rushed it ... and hammered the corner flag.

Do you know of any pre-match mishaps (missing players, two left boots, etc)?

John Gibson, Joel Griffiths, Jacob Burns and Mile Sterjovski there is a pre-match build-up of hair products.

Which team-mate could do with a new wardrobe?

Michael Santalab - he wears doggy outfits, and could do with a new brown shirt.

What is the biggest misconception about sportsmen?

All brawn and no brain.

Do you have a winning technique for scoring off the park?

The right wardrobe goes a long way.

Describe your ideal woman?

Intelligent, good looking, and rich.

Do you have a favourite Sydney nightspot?

'Mr Good Bar' on Oxford Street.

What is your pet hat?

Smokers.

Complete this sentence 'Love is...'

....being on a deserted island with music, women, and a soccer ball.

What would you consider to be a romantic night out?

A good restaurant, watching a movie, going out for drinks, and going home.

Has this ever being played out?

Yes.

What is your most cherished possession?

I have a good luck rock from Spain.

If you could have any supernatural power, what would it be?

To know what other people are thinking.

Do you have any hidden talents?

What you see, is what you get.

How would you spend your last \$50?

Play four auto picks on the Lotto.

Questions by Daniela Raco

Miro Gladovic: Agent

By Aidan Ormond

So you wanna be a soccer player's agent? Well it seems patience is the thing you're gonna need most says one of the three FIFA accredited agents in Australia, Miro Gladovic (right). Oh, and you're going to have to cough up a quarter of a million dollars too for a one-off license fee.

"There are so many facets to this job that when you are asked a question like what does it involve, there are too many aspects to mention," explained Gladovic, who represents players in Europe and in Australia while based in Dusseldorf.

"And you need lots of patience!"

A good example of this was the recent trial overseas of one of Gladovic's players. The club said they wanted him, the player was happy to go yet within 48 hrs the club changed its mind without explaining why. Gladovic, a former goalkeeper with Heidelberg United, says this is just part of the game.

"In a nutshell this job is a whole lot of networking on a worldwide level, with players clubs and agents alike. I have concentrated much of my efforts on England and Germany over the past three years.

"England because it is a league which has been most receptive of Australian talent, and Germany because they have relaxed regulations for foreign players."

Not surprisingly some NSL clubs, perhaps used to the semi-professional ways of the past, have not taken kindly to

agents acting on behalf of players.

It is something that is bound to cause friction.

"The only negative trend lately has been

the mentality of certain clubs in warning players against having agents deal on their behalf. I think this is a step in the wrong direction, as clubs only alienate such players, and create an atmosphere of mistrust between the club and player, by trying to intimidate players into accepting contracts solely on the clubs terms," he added.

Gladovic also pours water on the notion that an agent's life is all glamour. "I think people assume that because you travel the world it's glamorous. It's actually just hotels and grounds and little else. It actually can be quite lonely."

Being an ex-player (he began by helping out a fellow player and his agent career just flowed from there). Gladovic says the best part of the job is seeing players perform at the highest level possible.

And he notes that an agent is much more than just a business associate. "There are a lot of other issues, some personal, that you have to get used to dealing with when you are a player agent.

"It's never a bed of roses."



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'Stabber' puts the

MARCONI STALLIONS 0 CARLTON 1

McPherson 68.

Saturday night at Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 7, 224.

Elimination Final First Leg



By John Vrtaric

The dismissal of Marconi defender Mark Babic and a spate of yellow cards late in the game overshadowed what was a disappointing performance by the home team in its 0-1 loss to Carlton in the first leg of the Elimination Final.

After Babic was shown his second yellow card in the 59th minute, for a second foul on the speedy Archie Thompson, Carlton took a firm grip of the match and scored the winning goal in the 68th minute when big Dave McPherson out-jumped the defence to head past Michael Turnbull.

This was McPherson's 'second' goal in the match with the first one, a similarly headed goal from a corner, being disallowed in the 25th minute for a dubious off-side ruling by the linesman.

Five cards in the last twenty minutes of the game by referee Matthew Breeze was the final straw for the home crowd who vented their frustration at the game officials at the end of the match. A few young hot-heads threw some plastic bottles and a plastic bin was thrown onto the field but nothing more than occurs at most one day cricket games.

The Stallions continued their inconsistent form of late and failed to break down a very solid Carlton defence and resolute midfield that completely dominated their counterparts. Carlton's victory maintained their 100 per cent record over

the home team at Marconi Stadium

It is difficult to see Marconi turning the tables on Carlton in the second leg even with Zeljko Babic back in the team but as Stallions coach Eddie Krncevic said after the game, "there's ninety minutes of football and it's only 1-0, anything is possible."

Marconi were hoping to have Babic back in the team for the game but a late fitness test ruled him out although Krncevic gambled by putting him on the bench to use as a shock weapon late in the game. Unfortunately, he had little impact on the game when he came on in the 72nd minute and seemed reluctant to stretch out for fear of re-injuring his problem hamstring.

As well as missing Babic, Marconi lost their quiet achiever Chad Gibson due to suspension but welcomed back Mike Smith, as his replacement, from injury. Smith was given the task of marking Carlton's powerhouse midfielder Andrew Marth.

Carlton coach Stuart Munro included Archie Thompson in the starting line-up to partner Brazilian Alex Moreira to form a speedy striking partnership that was sure to cause problems for the much slower Marconi defensive duo of Mark Babic and Dominic Longo.

And so it proved vital in the end.

Babic's dismissal was primarily due to Thompson beating him for speed and Babic throwing out a challenge that clipped the back of Thompson's legs with the ball a couple of metres in front of the Carlton striker.

Unlike its last few home games Marconi started this match on the right foot and they weren't two goals behind after the first fifteen minutes as they were against Adelaide City Force and the Gippsland Falcons recently. In fact they looked the more dangerous team in the early part of the game.

Carlton possesses players of strong physical presence and they set out to assert their strength very early on. Craig Deans showed Francis Awaritefe that he was in for a rough evening with a strong challenge, Moreira demonstrated to the Marconi strongmen, Longo and Babic, that he would give as good as he gets while Marth and Smith clashed early.

But it was Marconi that had the better of the play and had the first half chance in the fifth minute. Pan-Kuen Kim played the ball to Kris Trajanovski who relayed the ball immediately to Brad Maloney racing past the stationary defence. He beat Steve Horvat and raced towards the goal but, just as he was about to shoot, the ball bobbled and he didn't strike it as cleanly as he would have liked. The powerfully struck shot flew over the bar without bothering Dean Anastasiadis in the Carlton goal.

The two wing-backs, Brendan Renaud and Danny Invincibile, along



Carlton's Andrew 'Stabber' Marth wins the ball on Saturday night in the first leg Elimination Final at Bossley Park.

with Smith, were prominent for Marconi as they raided down the Carlton wings. Both wing backs worked hard to get behind the Carlton defence with the best opportunity falling their way in the 12th minute.

Smith passed to Renaud who produced a quality low cross that reached Awaritefe on the near post. The striker, with his back to the goal, turned his marker, Deans, but just as he was about to shoot, with only Anastasiadis in front of him, the defender was able to recover and stretch out a leg that blocked the goal bound ball.

Further raids down the wings proved innocuous with only a looping header by Longo, from a Renaud free-kick, posing any threat but that, too, was easily handled by the 'keeper.

In the 24th minute Olyroo Simon Colosimo seemed to awaken the visitors when he came close to scoring with a pile-driver. A defensive clearance reached the utility defender and he unleashed a superb left foot half volley that Turnbull did well to deflect past his right post.

In the next minute the goal that wasn't. A free kick on the right was floated over to the far post where the dominant McPherson rose highest and nodded the ball in.

Referee Breeze pointed to the centre circle but was soon made aware of the raised flag on the far touch-line. After consultation with his linesman Breeze disallowed the goal for offside.

In the 31st minute Colosimo saw

another long range opportunity off a Smith clearance but this time it flew well wide of Turnbull's left post.

Carlton began taking control of the match and Atkinson and Colosimo were causing problems down the right wing but just before half time Marconi had two half chances.

In the 44th minute a Renaud corner from the right was headed downwards towards the Carlton goal from the far post but Deans was able to clear off his line amongst a melee of players.

Then a minute into time added on, it was Renaud again, this time a free kick from the right floated the ball over towards the Carlton penalty spot. Mark Babic ghosted in between Horvat and McPherson and glanced a header that beat Anastasiadis but drifted just over the bar, hitting the staunchion of the goal.

Carlton began the second brightly and Thompson was soon in the action. In the 49th minute he beat two players on the right and laid the ball off to Andrew Packer whose side foot shot was easily saved by the 'keeper.

Four minutes later Moreira set up Thompson for a shot but his effort was similarly saved by Turnbull.

In the 56th minute Marconi produced a quick counter attack but Awaritefe delayed the ball too long attempting to find Trajanovski on his left when Maloney was free on his right.

ELIMINATION FINAL MATCH STATS



MARCONI STALLIONS:

Turnbull, Kim, Babic M. Longo, Invincibile, Renaud, Care (Babic Z 72), Awaritefe (McDonald 76), Trajanovski.



CARLTON:

Anastasiadis, Horvat, Deans, McPherson, Colosimo (Terminello 94), Packer, Marth, Lapsansky, Atkinson, Moreira (Slater 75), Thompson (Markovski 92).

Yellows:

Stallions: M. Babic 37, C. Care 61, Z. Babic 72, B. Renaud 82, K. Trajanovski 93+, D. Longo 96+.

Carlton: Lapsansky 58, Terminello 95+.

Reds:

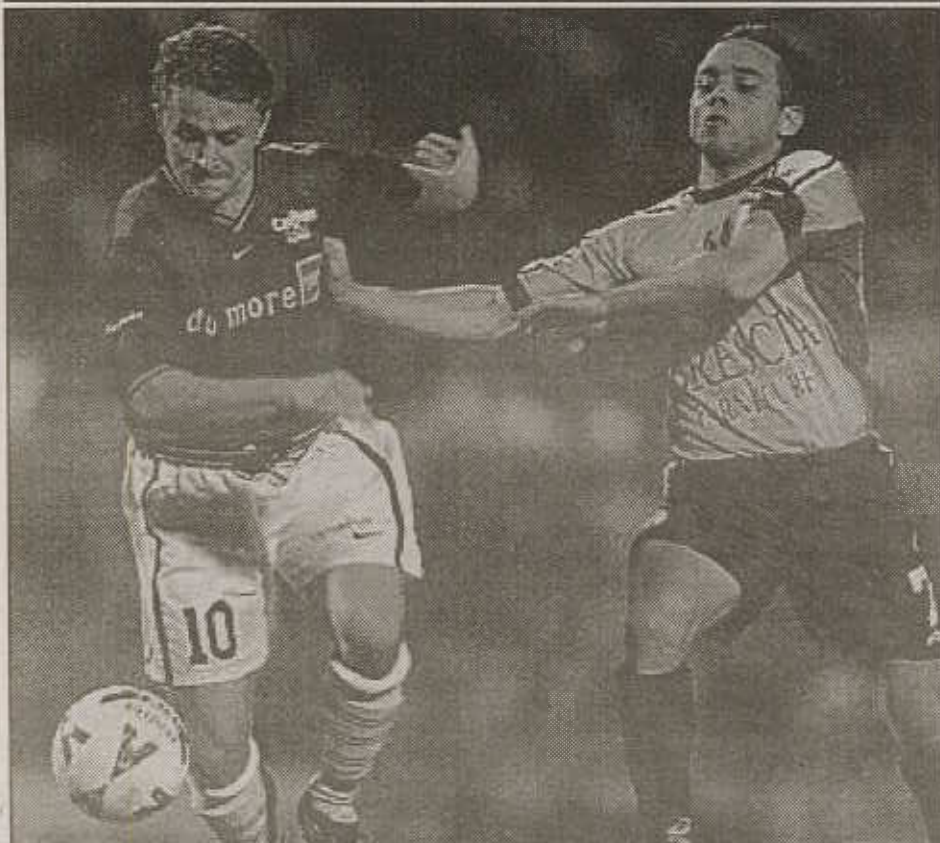
Stallions: M. Babic 59.

Best Players:

3. MARTH (CARLTON)
2. McPherson (Carlton)
1. Invincibile (Stallions)

Referee: Matthew Breeze

boot into Marconi



Lubo Lapsansky and Chris Care battle away in midfield on Saturday night.

Second leg preview by John Vrtaric

Marconi face an uphill battle to reverse a first leg 0-1 loss to a Carlton team that has been in good form over the last few weeks.

A comprehensive away victory, which could have been greater but for a couple of superb saves by Stallions' keeper Michael Turnbull, will provide the Melbourne team with plenty of confidence for the return leg.

Carlton caused the home team plenty of problems in the set pieces with their three big men from the back, Dave McPherson, Craig Deans and Steve Horvat, clearly superior in the air.

Further problems for Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic is the loss of his tallest defender Mark Babic. His sending off in Saturday's game means an automatic one match suspension.

Offsetting the loss of Babic is the return of Chad Gibson who was suspended for the first leg. Gibson has been Marconi's most consistent midfielder this season and will add workrate and defensive qualities to a midfield that has struggled all season.

Gibson is most likely to replace Christian Care with Mike Smith retaining his spot alongside Gibson and Brad Maloney in the midfield.

Buddy Farah, who had played sweeper for most of the early part of the season is favoured to replace the suspended Babic.

But it is the other Babic that could make the difference on Friday. Zeljko Babic is likely to make his return from a hamstring injury. His foray late in the first game was inconsequential and he looked very tentative whenever he attempted to stretch out.

He has been sorely missed in the two games he missed and his speed will cause plenty of trouble for the much

taller and much slower Carlton central defence.

The question is: Will he be fit? Marconi has an extra five days to work on the lithe striker's hamstring and with everything at stake Krncevic is more than likely to risk the brilliant striker.

But he won't score unless he gets the right service from the midfield and that is where Marconi has been having problems all season.

A great deal rests on the shoulders of captain Maloney - a disappointing season affected by injury and inconsistent form could be totally turned around if he rises to the occasion.

Carlton, on the other hand, has everything in its favour. A victory away from home means that Marconi has to beat the home team by a clear two goals.

With a defence as strong as theirs they are supremely confident of taking the next step. A strong midfield headed by the experienced Andrew Marth and the guile of Lubo Lapsansky dominated the first leg and they are sure to produce the same sort of performance in the second leg.

Simon Colosimo is slowly getting back to his best after his horrendous injury and will probably be given more freedom to attack in the return leg. His attacking options may be limited by the need to keep any eye on the attacking raids of his opposite, Brendan Renaud.

As Krncevic said after the first leg "anything is possible" but it is difficult to see Marconi coming away from Melbourne with a two goal victory.

Much will depend on the fitness of Babic and if he is not fully fit he will be sorely tested by McPherson, Marth and co.

Three minutes later Marconi's fate was sealed.

Thompson received the ball deep inside the Marconi half, turned his marker, Mark Babic, proceeded to run away from him but was crudely brought down. Breeze had no option but to produce a second yellow card for the Marconi stalwart.

And it wasn't long before Carlton took advantage of their numerical superiority. The pressure increased on Marconi and in the 68th minute they gave away a corner, albeit, on this occasion, needlessly. Smith went up for header with Moreira but skewed it for a corner - he was instantly upset with himself and even more so within seconds.

Colosimo took the corner from the right and McPherson rose above Smith to nod the ball past Turnbull.

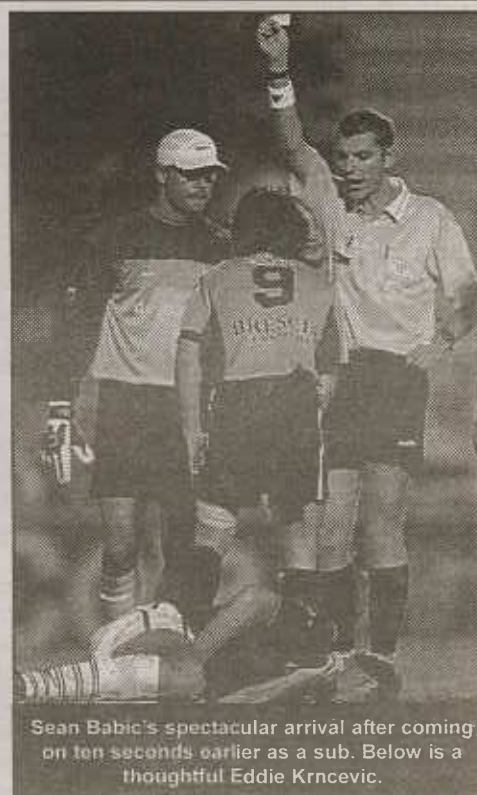
In the 75th minute Carlton had the opportunity to seal the two leg final. Atkinson played the ball to Moreira on the left and his shot turned into a cross with Marth sliding in on the right post stretching out but lashed the ball over the bar.

Ten minutes later Marth had another chance. McPherson won the ball in a challenge and played it to Thompson in the box, the young striker relayed it to substitute Stuart Slater who rolled it back to Marth.

The Carlton hardman hit it well but Turnbull was equal to it and pushed it over the bar.

Marth couldn't stay out of the action and one minute later he had another opportunity. Thompson again beat Longo and squared the ball to Marth who placed the shot towards Turnbull's right corner but the younger 'keeper, almost wrong-footed, dived brilliantly to save a certain goal.

Two minutes from the end of normal time Carlton thought they had the killer



Sean Babic's spectacular arrival after coming on ten seconds earlier as a sub. Below is a thoughtful Eddie Krncevic.

second goal.

Another Colosimo corner from the right was again won by McPherson and seemed to cross the goal-line but the referee ruled otherwise.

The ball returned to Thompson three metres out but his shot was also blocked on the line.

There was almost eight minutes of added time but the match petered out without further incidents although Renaud and Carlton substitute John Markovski became entangled on the sound of the final whistle.



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Brett Emerton on fire as

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 4

Emerton 21, 46, Cardozo 34, 88.

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 1

Veart 47.

Sunday afternoon at Belmore Sports Ground, Sydney. Crowd: 5,449.

Elimination Final First Leg



By Arlo White

A brace apiece for Olyroo skipper Brett Emerton and goal machine Pablo Cardozo were enough to secure the first leg spoils on Sunday night, as a rampant Sydney Olympic destroyed the visiting Adelaide Force 4-1 in a scintillating 90 minutes at the Belmore Sports Ground.

Although they all but limped into the post season on the back of a Finals threatening slump, coach Branko Culina released his attacking hounds on a shell shocked Adelaide, and saw his hungry charges produce a wonderful display of fluent Football that tore the heart out of Zoran Matic's top six gatecrashers. And boy did they love it at Belmore.

A frustrated Blues boss had consistently responded to criticism of his side's late season stumbles by highlighting a crippling injury list that would have had Florence Nightingale on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Yet sure enough, with his top guns back and firing on all cylinders, Olympic were simply irresistible going forward in an Elimination Final contest that had everything.

If Olympic's on-field fortunes are often determined by their notoriously fragile confidence then the Force came into the game with truckloads of it. A barely believable streak of 11 wins in 13 starts had capped their Lazarus style rise from last place dead weights into many people's dark horses for the title. Yet when it

really mattered, wasteful finishing and a charitable backline ensured that they will have to produce another Finals miracle to keep their boots off the pegs for another week.

The first sight of goal in an absorbing contest fell the way of the visitors. Veteran midfielder Aurelio Vidmar played a neat one two with Nick Sabljak down the left flank, and when his low centre was only partially cleared the ball fell to a loitering Sabljak 18 yards out. With an eternity to shape and shoot, the youngster's effort was fiercely struck but a yard over John Perosh's goal.

Olympic though, seemed far more purposeful and confident than in recent outings. Kresimir Marusic was pulling all the strings in the centre of the park and he had ever-willing runners in the strike duo of Emerton and Cardozo, who, along with Gabriel Mendez, were giving the Adelaide defence all sorts of problems.

The first warning came on nine minutes when a super through ball from Cardozo sent Mendez scampering down the right. Little 'Chi-Chi' skipped over two challenges, the second of which could easily have earned him a penalty had he hit the deck, and his cross was only scrambled clear at the second attempt.

Returning Skipper Ante Juric was next to raid Adelaide territory. After his barnstorming break from the back had found Mendez, the man mountain centre half found himself through on goal courtesy of a kind deflection, and only sharp reflexes from keeper Cagalj prevented his goalbound effort from opening the scoring.

The NSL's top marksman Damian Mori was soon in the action for the Force, looking to add to his league leading 22-goal haul.

After turning Scott Baillie inside out on the byline, the muscular front man's teasing centre was only parried out to Italian striker Claudio Pelosi and his effort brought an outstanding save out of ex-Spirit keeper Perosh. In the ensuing counter attack, Brett Emerton came close for the homieside but saw his right foot drive whiz narrowly wide of Cagalj's right hand post.

It was all action at this stage and it was Emerton again who looked the most likely to break the deadlock. Thriving in his striking role, the 21 year old's powerful run across the Force's penalty area saw him shrug off two challenges like they were a mere nuisance, before striking a right footer that only cannoned to safety off the foot of the post.

The pulsating attacking play continued and it was clear this game was providing everything you could ask for of a finals encounter. Next it was Mori again for the Force. Fed by the impressive Carl Veart, he gave the Belmore faithful another heart in the mouth moment when his angled right foot



The picture tells the story: Olympic's Cardozo and Emerton (right) celebrate the fourth goal as Force keeper Adrian Cagalj throws his hands up in despair.

effort seemed destined for the bottom corner. In the blink of an eye the ball fizzed wide, and if it didn't take a lick of paint off the woodwork, it was close enough to smell the fumes.

With this kind of pressure being asserted on both defences it was only a matter of time before something had to give, and it was cue that man Emerton. If they say that the great players truly rise to the big occasion then the Olyroo skipper was about to prove it. 21 minutes were on the clock when George Goutzoulis flighted over an inch perfect cross, and there was Emerton to thigh down with perfection, and despite the close attentions of Alex Tobin, he thrashed an unstoppable effort past a hapless Cagalj for the opener. It was nothing more than he, Olympic and the game deserved.

Olympic's possession Football was a joy to watch at this stage and Emerton nearly doubled the advantage on 25 minutes. After a flowing move had involved Thomas, Cardozo, Mendez twice and Goutzoulis, Emerton's powerful curling effort from the edge of the area was clawed in at full stretch by a cat-like Cagalj.

But Belmore reached a mild state of delirium soon after. Mendez's pin point thread released a scampering Lindsay Wilson darting into the box and when Bradley Hassell's attentions became a little too physical, the young left back

crashed to the ground to win a somewhat controversial penalty. The questions mattered not to Cardozo, and he duly drilled in his 20th goal of the campaign from the spot, a new single season Olympic scoring record for him, but more importantly for Olympic, a two-goal buffer.

The chances were still coming thick and fast. Firstly Mori was horrified to see his 12 yard blast clear Perosh's net, and just before the break Scott Baillie's deft chip almost caught Cagalj off his line, and it took some smart footwork from the Adelaide custodian to scamper back and gather.

Any lingering doubts that Olympic would settle for their first half rewards were soon dispelled in sensational style. From the re-start, Marusic played a wonderful ball out to Wilson on the left. After stumbling over Gianluca Ligati's challenge he played Brett Emerton into the box and within two clinical touches, and just 16 seconds of the resumption, Olympic were three up and bossing the tie.

But tell that to Force veteran Carl Veart. His presence in the midfield was becoming increasingly influential and with Olympic momentarily revelling in their supremacy, he side-stepped two challenges on the edge of the box and drilled a left foot effort in off Perosh's left post for a potentially crucial 47th minute away goal.

ELIMINATION FINAL MATCH STATS

SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Perosh, Thomas, Baillie, Juric, Cardozo, Emerton, Mendez, Wilson, (Zorbas 83), Goutzoulis (Tsekenis 56), Kohler, Marusic, Arambasic 86).



ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Cagalj, Ligati, Tobin, (Cartwright 64), Mori, Veart, Sabljak, Vidmar, Kemp, Costanzo, Hassell, Pelosi.



Yellows:
Olympic: Mendez (35), Thomas (42), Kohler (68).

Baillie (86).

Force: Hassell (33).

Reds:

Force: Costanzo (87).

Best Players:

3. BRETT EMERTON (OLYMPIC)

2. Kresimir Marusic (Olympic)

3. Pablo Cardozo (Olympic)

Referee: Simon Micallef.

Olympic torches Force



Olyroo skipper Emerton and former Soccerroo skipper Alex Tobin clash on Sunday at Belmore. Olympic is now favourite to go through, but

Second leg preview by Arlo White

So it's all over isn't it? A healthy three goal cushion means that Olympic merely have to strap on their boots and trot out at the Hindmarsh Stadium on Friday night to cruise through to a minor semi-final match up with either Marconi or Carlton. Oh, you must be joking.

Olympic's fabulous first leg display will surely fuel the imagination of the Belmore faithful but Force boss Zoran Matic is a wily old character, and the old adage of 'been there done that' is never more appropriate than when Adelaide and Finals Football are concerned. Put simply, you can write off the Zebras at your mortal peril.

Cast your minds back, if you will, to the 1997 post season and their first round match-up with the Marconi Stallions. Trailing 3-0 after a disastrous first leg, Adelaide somehow turned it around with a sensational 4-0 success at Norwood, thus recording the biggest come back victory in the history of NSL finals Football. And that was just one episode in a finals pedigree that has created such an aura around Adelaide in the sudden death leg of the season.

The entire league looked on nervously as the Zebras crept up the ladder in the final stages this time out, nervous but hardly surprised. You don't just play against eleven men in striped shirts at Hindmarsh in the knockout stages, you're pitted against history as well.

However, Olympic's first leg victory was by no means a fluke. As coach Culina has persistently reminded us, his injury woes have prevented his first eleven running out onto the paddock for the best part of three months. But now they're back at full strength, the result is a devastating attacking side with more armoury at their disposal than at a NATO shindig.

They said that Marusic and Mendez couldn't play in the same side.

Wrong. Marusic's vision and prompting in central midfield are the perfect foil for Mendez to dribble away in the danger zones, and with such creative forces behind them, the strike partnership of Cardozo and Emerton looked gleeful and free as they terrorised Tobin et al.

Olympic will carry a clean bill of health into the return leg, Lindsay Wilson's substitution was for serious cramp rather than a recurrence of his thigh muscle tear. Giant skipper Ante Juric came through his first run-out in eight weeks unscathed and the flair filled Marusic is well on the way to full match fitness.

The key to the second leg could be whether hot shot Damian Mori can find his scoring boots. The warning signs were there at Belmore, the usually prolific striker uncharacteristically spurning three or four clear cut openings. He had the chances and didn't take them, and for that he and the Force were punished.

Whether he will be similarly charitable on his home turf is unlikely, and the Force will look to him to lead from the front.

In defence, Costanzo's ban will hurt the Adelaide and much will rest on the fitness of old warhorse Alex Tobin, whose leadership qualities you'd love to bottle.

Just how Culina's Blues handle a three goal cushion will be crucial. To sit back and contain could be suicidal with Mori, Pelosi and an expected 15,000 screaming South Australians around, but the all out attacking policy employed in the first leg could have equally disastrous effects. But if you live by the sword, you die by the sword and in my opinion, Olympic's season renaissance will continue on to the minor semi final, but Blues fans, don't expect to have any nails left at the end of the Hindmarsh showdown, as one thing is for certain, there will be goals.

Suddenly, and buoyed by Veart's opportunism, it was Adelaide in the ascendancy now. Mori came close with a diving header from a Sabljak cross, and full back Ligati shot high and wide of the upright when played in by Veart. The Force's errant finishing was beginning to tell, and Kemp was next to put a perfectly good opportunity onto the train tracks, skying way over when set up by the busy Sabljak.

Yet just as the crowd were beginning to shift uneasily in their seats, the game took another twist late on. With barely four minutes remaining Brett Emerton's unrelenting stamina took him through a crowd of six huddled defenders. With the Adelaide posse doing a very good impression of a stripe shirted Anthill mob, Emerton surged through the lot only to be cruelly checked by the last man Costanzo.

Referee Simon Micallef, the enemy of an angry mob at Belmore barely weeks before, had little choice but to produce a red card for the defender, to leave Adelaide a man down.

And how quickly the advantage told. With just two minutes remaining, Mendez lobbed a super ball into the path of Emerton in the box, and with the depleted Force defence totally AWOL, his calm side footed square ball found Cardozo unmarked to tap home an emphatic fourth, and seal Olympic's first Finals win for a decade.

Branko Culina was full of smiles afterwards, "I was always confident we'd do well" he boasted, "but we're a long way off getting through. Adelaide are a very good side and have proven that over the last 11 or 12 years". "You can never underestimate them", he continued, "and it's going to be a real tough one".

He could barely conceal his delight at finally having a full strength squad to pick from and had thoroughly enjoyed his side's attacking flair. "When you play at home you have to take a few risks, especially with our crowd.

"They're not a patient crowd so we had to make sure that we got into the



Crucial moment: Costanzo's red card in the latter stages of this pulsating game.

game fairly early and tried to score an early goal. People have short memories, and why did we turn it around?, well maybe the players had something to do with it," he said.

For Force boss Zoran Matic, the result came as a real "culture shock", he added, "Conceding four goals is not something we do very often but we've got to live with that. Concentration was the problem and it cost us most of the time, we were committed to scoring a second goal and in the end that cost us.

"The penalty we conceded was very soft, I thought the referee was a very good mate of mine" he claimed tongue firmly in cheek, "but he couldn't wait, that was a good revenge. You cannot score with every chance that you have and we just didn't score, but that's the way it is."

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INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER

Marconi edge out Olympic

By John Vrtaric

The stars of the future were on show prior to the big Marconi and Carlton game at Marconi Stadium. The two combatants, Marconi Stallions and Sydney Olympic, had finished level on points in third and fourth place with this match being the elimination final. The Stallions eventually winning 2-1.

There was no second chance for the loser and the youngsters put on a rugged game on a pitch that was not conducive for good football.

Both teams went into the game below strength with a number of players missing from both sides. Two of the more prominent players missing were Lee Miot from the Olympic side and Grant Last of Marconi, both players members of the Young Soccerroo train on squad for next year's World Youth Championship.

But there were still plenty of stars of the future on show on both sides. Marconi fielded Saso Trajceviski, a promising sweeper, and Daniel Schwarzer, brother of Mark, keeping goals while Todd Brodie, a left sided wing-back, and Kevo Gullessarian are also members of the Young Soccerroo train on squad.

Olympic had their share of quality players as well with another member of the Young Soccerroo train-on squad Robert Gaspar being most prominent in the game.

Silver medal winners with the Joeys in last years Under 17 World Cup Dylan Macallister and Anthony Doumanis were also part of the Olympic team but Macallister lasted only 21 minutes after suffering an ankle injury.

The first half was a scrappy affair with Olympic taking an early 9th minute lead through Anthony Pisano.

An unfortunate incident late in the first half was a bad injury incurred by Olympic's Ali Chaline who broke a leg in a clash with Marconi's Junior Josaisa.

Olympic deserved their half time lead but Marconi came back strongly in the second half with Daniel Severino creating a lot of their play by dropping deep from his striking role.

Severino soon equalised when a good run by Anthony Hartsharm down the middle in the 53rd minute provided him with the opportunity which he duly converted.

In the 64th minute Severino's left wing cross caused problems for Olympic 'keeper George Bouhoutsos who lost the ball to Michael Beauchamp. The tall

defender played the ball back to Eric Anabalon but he hit the shot well over the bar.

In the 75th minute Olympic had an opportunity to forge ahead when they received a free kick on the edge of the penalty box just wide of Schwarzer's left post.

Gaspar took the kick which cleared the wall but went just wide of the left post.

As extra time beckoned with most preparing themselves for spine tingling finish the young Marconi team had other ideas.

In the last minute of normal time a corner from the right was headed back across the goal from the far post by Beauchamp to substitute Anthony Mondello who had no trouble nodding the ball into an empty net.

With only a few minutes to go the Marconi fans begun celebrating their progress to the final but there was to be a bit more excitement before they could open the champagne bottles.

In the third minute of injury time the ball bobbed about just outside the Marconi box and Arthur Diles produced a delicate lob which looked certain to drop under the bar for the equalising goal. Until Schwarzer came to the rescue; that is. The ball seemed to have already gone past him but he flew into the air and superbly pushed the ball over the bar.

Marconi were best served by Serevino and Trajceviski who averted danger a number of times in the second half with well timed intercepts and good positioning. Olympic's Gaspar stood out in the second half controlling the midfield and spraying the ball around the ground with his educated left foot.

MARCONI STALLIONS: Schwarzer, Trajceviski, Beachamp, Bennett, Hartsharm, Brodie, Josaisa, Manente, Anabalon (Mondello 76), Severino, Gulesarian.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Bouhoutsos, Diles, Kyrzopoulos, Dinante, Bariamis, Gaspar, Hussein (George 88), Doumanis, Chaline (Madonis 46), Macallister (Seitis 21), Pisano.

Yellows:
Stallions: Brodie 25, Josaisa 49.
Olympic: Gaspar 23, Pisano 85, Kyrzopoulos 88.

Best Players:
3. SEVERINO (STALLIONS)
2. Gaspar (Olympic)

Power march into Grand Final

By Jeremy Inson

On a night made for heroes it was Parramatta Power goalkeeper, Barney Smith, who stood out more than anyone else. The young custodian pulled off a number of point blank saves both in normal and extra time to help his side to a 4-2 win on penalties after it was locked up at 1-1.

However it is the two penalty stops that helped seal Parramatta's place in the Grand final that will live the longest in the memory.

For Northern Spirit it was heartache. They had played their part in an exiting, even sided contest and no doubt will be kicking themselves for spurning a number of golden opportunities.

Ryan Griffiths and Todd Macrae will particularly feel the pain, for it was their penalty misses that gave the Power victory. Spirit will now meet Marconi in a play off for the vacant Grand Final berth.

With both teams deploying a 3-5-2 formation the match took a while to settle. Parramatta looked for the height of striker, Luke Roodenburg, whilst Spirit sought a path through the middle and their play-maker, Simon Catanzaro. After fifteen minutes it was Northern Spirit who grabbed the initiative. A break from Catanzaro deep into Parramatta's half allowed him to play in striker Ryan Griffiths. Power keeper Barry Smith stopped his first shot, but the rebound ran kindly for him and he coolly lobbed the keeper from the edge of the penalty area.

For the rest of the half it was Parramatta Power who had the better chances. Relaxing into their passing game, they opened up the Spirit defence on a number of occasions.

Danny Kuckucka and Brendan Santalab both had goalbound efforts kept out by Northern Spirit keeper, Chris Sharpe. Santalab and Roodenburg went close with headers and Mark Byrnes, Ahmad Elrich and John Kelso tried their luck from long range.

Nonetheless Northern Spirit always looked threatening on the counter attack, with Adam Snyder and James Monie both seeing shots saved.

Seven minutes into the second half, Parramatta Power were back on level terms. A deep left wing cross from Monte Pfrengle reached the head of Roodenburg, whose looping header found the back of the net.

For Northern Spirit this was a wake up call. For the next twenty-five minutes they crafted a number of chances. Joseph Schirripa blasted over after a cross from Snyder.

Derryk Kane fired high after good work from Monie and Snyder himself will probably feel he should have done better that shoot straight at the keeper when put through by Simon Miller.

Power, though finished the half the stronger of the two. Roodenburg, Santalab and substitute Danny Cabrera all went close with opportunities.

Extra time mirrored the majority of the match. The two expertly marshalled defences kept chances to a minimum and reduced both sides to hopeful long-range efforts. For the Power, right winger, Ahmad Elrich and substitute Paul Down caused Spirit problems, Elrich going the closest when his cross shot rebounded off the post.

Peter Antar had the Spirit's best opening but, as on all but one occasion, Barry Smith was equal to the shot.

As the match drifted to a close, both teams had the air of accepting the inevitable. Catanzaro, Paul Wearne, Roodenburg and Cabrera were all successful, before Griffiths and Macrae saw theirs saved. John Kelso and Matt Thompson held their nerve to send Parramatta through, though the plaudits should rightly go to Smith in the Parramatta goal.

PARRAMATTA POWER: Smith, Dixon (Pearson 80'), Kelso, Pfrengle, Gatt (Down 75'), B Santalab, Elrich, Thompson, Roodenburg, Kuckucka (Cabrera 58'), Byrnes.

NORTHERN SPIRIT: Sharpe, Prentice, Snyder, R Griffiths, Schirripa, Monie (Antar 94'), Kane, Catanzaro, Israel, Lyons (Miller 45' (Macrae 118')), Wearne.

Yellow Cards:
Power: Santalab 33.
Spirit: Israel 72, Antar 105.

Best players:
3. BARNEY SMITH (POWER)
2. Simon Catanzaro (Spirit)
1. Ahmad Elrich (Power)

By Roy Hay

Carlton reached the Grand Final with a three-one win over the Victorian Institute of Sport at Fawcner's Smith Reserve in the Qualifying Semi-final on Sunday.

The first half was even and closely contested with some excellent individual performances from George Pantelidis and Spase Dilevski in defence for the VIS and George Papadopoulos and Eddie Awad for the Dark Blues.

The Minor Premier, which has gone through the season undefeated, went behind early in the second half when Evan Papadopoulos turned his man and sprinted to the bye-line before squaring the ball across goal to give David Terek the chance to knock it home from only five metres out.

Colin Azzopardi then put Dusko Delic through just outside the penalty area. Delic

weaved his way through before firing in the equaliser.

Delic was involved in Carlton's second goal which came after Angelo Moutsopoulos crossed causing an almighty scramble in the VIS box. The consensus was that Steve Martin got the final touch.

Finally Daniel Vasilevski found himself with a little space just inside the box and hammered a shot off the underside of the bar, which bounced down and was eventually scrambled away but the linesman was on the spot to award the goal.

The VIS had its chances and Steve Tilovski had to make three good saves to hold it out, plus an Azzopardi clearance off the goal-line when he was eventually beaten. The VIS will now play South Melbourne in the Preliminary Final.

In the Elimination Semi-Final South Melbourne overcame a plucky Bulleen by three goals to nil. Michael Theoklitos had an outstanding game in goal for Bulleen

saving his side time after time and largely being responsible for the nil-all score at half time.

In midfield Bulleen struggled to cope with the sprightly Boris Ovcin and Adam Poole, while Anthony Magnacca was a real threat until a shoulder injury reduced his effectiveness.

In the second half, South Melbourne took control with two goals in five minutes both from Elias Dimourtzidis.

Though lacking match fitness the big striker refused to give up after Theoklitos blocked several of his shots and finally he got his reward in 57 minutes. Rade Culibrk and Poole worked the ball forward and substitute Andrew Mashoian headed down for Dimourtzidis to shoot past the keeper.

Five minutes later Dimourtzidis was heading into the box when he was brought down by Paul Sachinidis. Getting up the striker buried the penalty kick.

Luigi Gullaci tried to rally Bulleen in

midfield, and Paul Presti also worked hard, but South went further ahead when Mashoian finished off a good flowing move by his team-mates.

Bulleen and South Dandenong deserve great credit for their efforts this season which kept the NSL youth teams honest and produced several first team players for their respective clubs.

The Preliminary Final between the VIS and South Melbourne was not scheduled but will probably be played on Friday 19 May at 5 pm prior to Carlton v Marconi.

ELIMINATION SEMI FINAL
South Melbourne 3 Bulleen Inter 0
Dimourtzidis 2, Mashoian

PRELIMINARY SEMI FINAL
Carlton 3 VIS 1
Delic, Martin, Vasilevski Terek

Rams win but Thomson in hospital

PREMIER LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Adelaide Blue Eagles	13	10	1	2	37	11	25	31
Croydon Kings	13	10	0	3	35	14	21	30
Modbury	13	10	0	3	21	13	8	30
Port Lion	13	8	1	4	24	14	10	25
Elizabeth City	13	6	2	5	23	20	3	20
Campbelltown City	13	6	1	6	18	22	-4	19
Adelaide City	13	4	3	6	23	24	-1	15
Raiders	13	5	0	8	17	20	-3	15
White City Warriors	13	4	1	8	8	18	-10	13
Cumberland United	13	3	1	9	13	26	-13	10
Metro Stars	13	2	3	8	15	31	-16	9
West Torrens Birkalla	13	2	3	8	12	31	-19	9

STATE LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Olympic FC	13	10	3	0	31	10	21	33
Para Hills Knights	13	7	4	2	32	15	17	25
Salisbury United	13	8	1	4	25	20	5	25
Port Pirie City	13	7	3	3	29	18	11	24
Northern Demons	13	6	3	4	25	20	5	21
Adelaide Cobras	13	6	2	4	23	18	5	20
Western Strikers	13	4	6	3	24	21	3	19
Noarlunga United	13	6	0	7	18	21	-3	18
Enfield City	13	3	4	6	24	27	-3	13
Adelaide Hills	13	3	1	9	18	33	-15	10
Seaford	13	2	1	10	11	32	-21	7
Panthers	13	1	1	11	12	34	-22	4

By Donald Campbell and Margaret Bowden

Last week it was the Campbelltown Red Devils who pulled off a shock win against leaders Blue Eagles. This week, previously struggling Elizabeth City Rams turned the tables, defeating the Red Devils 1-0 in a no-holds-barred battle at Ramsey Park.

Farncombe put Alby Kidd's charges ahead early in the game and clung to the lead until the final whistle. Rams stalwart Andy Thomson had to leave the field for a trip to hospital to have 12 stitches in a head gash, and will be sorely missed in Monday's Cup match against Adelaide City.

Adelaide Blue Eagles survived a late charge by lowly Cumberland Foxes to post a 3-2 win at home and retain top position.

The Blue Eagles, down to 10 men for most of the match after Roy Zito was sent off, raced to a 3-0 lead thanks to a Michael Brooks double and a Frank Sergi special.

Never-say-die Foxes almost stole a point in the dying minutes, with subs Andrew Fowler and David Raponi scoring in time added on.

Croydon Kings put a stop to Raiders' winning streak, posting a 2-0 win in another tough encounter which saw 6 players cautioned. This was Raiders' first loss in 4 weeks.

Josh Christison scored a 25 metre screamer to put the Kings one up in the first half and regular scorer Joel Porter sealed the victory with a brilliant solo effort in the second.

Birkalla put up a valiant fight against the screaming Modbury Jets, but went down 0-3 at

home to crash to the bottom of the table.

The Jets' first goal came from a massive drop kick from keeper Robbie Matosevic. The Birks' defence failed to clear and Isaacson slotted the ball home.

Ex-Birks' marksman Jason Trimboli put away a penalty, then followed this up two minutes later with an unstoppable shot from 10 metres. Ben Schmidt and Shaun Plummer were Birks' most outstanding players.

Port Lion Pirates scored their second win on the trot, totally dominating the full 90 minutes to put a 2-0 halt to White City Warriors' charge for the finals.

The Warriors looked only a shadow of the team fans have watched over the past few weeks, and were lucky to escape with such a low score line.

Instant hero last week for the Warriors, Bradley Armour, ran all day, but the Pirates' defence refused him any clear shots on goal. George Tsonis and Joe Calabria scored for the Pirates to cement their place in the top four.

Another shock result was the 2-2 draw between Adelaide City and Metro

Stars, all four goals coming before half time.

Judging by past weeks' performances, the pundits predicted a City win, but Metro showed their best fighting qualities to pick up a vital point which lifted them off the bottom of the table.

Robbie Saraceno scored first for City, but Paul Simmons equalised for Metro. Determined to win, Lucas Pantellis went for a solo run, finishing with a brilliant shot to give City the lead.

Again Metro struck back through Jason Pedron. Sadly, Metro's playmaker Michael Berlinger suffered a broken leg in a clash with new City keeper Daniel Godley.

In the State League three unexpected results in wet, windy conditions created major interest in the State League this weekend.

In the match of the round, League leader Olympic FC dropped a valuable point, drawing 2-2 at home in a scrappy affair with determined Western Strikers.

A hotly disputed penalty ten minutes in gave Strikers the lead, Piekarski making no mistake from the spot.

Olympic keeper Darien Bauer kept his side in contention with two crucial saves in the first half.

Olympic fired up in the second, Sava Athansiadis scoring five minutes in, then Strikers scoring an own goal in a desperate attempt to clear a curling shot.

Strikers' most experienced player, George Konstantopoulos, well known for his dislike of losing, scored the equaliser late in the game.

Second placed Para Hills Knights, under new coach Harry Bell, went down to 0-3 to Northern Demons in the shock of the round.

Knights seemed to miss the motivation of outgoing coach Eric Norman, but were unlucky not to get on the score sheet, hitting the post three times!

Demons, under the inspirational leadership of player-coach Ricky Cerachio, capitalised on all their chances, Ryan Weir, Nick Stamatelopoulos and Sam Salvemini sinking a goal each to take the three points.

Cobras' winning streak came to an abrupt 0-3 end at Weigall Oval, the home team feeling the full brunt of a Hills Hawks' revival.

The Harpas family, usually the backbone of the Cobras, was in the wars from the start, Peter being stretchered off with a head injury and brother Paul turning the ball into his own net trying to clear a savage cross from Hawks' player of the match Simon Wegener.

The Hawks defence, led by Sam Bowden and Simon Dawes, gave Cobras no quarter, while midfielders Ally Marshall, Matt Couper, Matt Hawthorn and Justin Gallagher tore the Cobras apart.

Wegener scored the first goal with a towering header from a Marshall cross, and classy Juan Rodriguez scored the third, chipping the ball over the keeper.

In the other surprise of the round, Enfield Falcons succumbed 1-2 to struggling Seaford Surfers.

Thomas Connor has become a regular goalscorer for Seaford since rejoining the club, and the Surfers could pull off a few surprises in the remaining nine matches.

M. Sanger scored again for Enfield, while M. Rooney scored the winner for Seaford.

Noarlunga Bulldogs went down 0-2 at home to in-form Salisbury Apaches.

The Bulldogs had a chance to go one up when the ref awarded them a penalty in the first half, but Apaches' keeper Lindsay Paterson pulled off a miraculous save to stir the Apaches into action.

Ray Deeley punished a Bulldogs' defensive lapse just on half time, then Elliot lobbed a shot over keeper Fraser McLean to make it 2-0 for the Apaches late in the second half.

The Bulldogs threw everything at the Apaches, but there was no way past keeper Paterson.

Port Pirie City fought off a determined Panthers side to post a 2-1 victory.

The only surprise here was the closeness of the scoreline, many so called 'experts' predicting a big win for Pirie. Steve Farrugia scored both goals for Port Pirie, while Smith scored Panthers' only goal.

Anthony Best never gave in for Panthers, earning the accolade of 'Best on ground'!

WA news with Brett Klucznik

GOING TOUGH AT JOONDALUP

With his side having an indifferent start to the season, E.C.U. Joondalup Coach Paul Simmons has already conceded that this campaign is going to be a long one for the club.

"We've had a big change in staff from last year, we've got probably seven or eight kids who are under the age of 21.

And in the four games that have already gone in the Premier League we've had six first team players missing from the team that won the championship last year."

And the club will lose two of those players still in their teens to English club Southampton early in June as midfielders Darren Broxton and Anthony Danze head off to sign apprenticeship papers.

As for who's in the running for this

year's trophy, "I think it's going to be a lot wider open than it has been in other seasons," Simmons said recently.

"If you look at the results that have already gone, Sorrento have conceded eleven goals in three games then beat us 4-1 last week.

"Fremantle City have been down one week and up the next, and again they have a lot of stars down at Fremantle, but it's questionable about their depth.

Eric Williams is a fine coach and he's certainly turned Swan around but again it's a question of the depth that they have."

"Last season when we won the championship we had a first team squad of 18. Some have moved on and some have stayed but we've been plagued by injury.

"In the first four games of the season we've managed to probably only field half the side ... But we'll be back to full strength in the next couple of weeks and if

you look at the table it's wide open," Simmons said somewhat optimistically.

SWAN I.C. TRANSFORMED

After a disappointing Night Series which saw Swan I.C. chart only two points from five games, coach Eric Williams has turned the team around with astonishing success in the Premier League.

After four rounds, the club are sitting on top of the ladder and are yet to drop a point. "We're pleasantly surprised with how it's turned out," Williams said.

"The acquisition of Corey Hugo at the back, in the goalkeeping terms, has made it a lot safer for us. In the Night Series we were trialling a few players and trying to get the balance.

"And it seems like it's come together."

PERTH FINDING THEIR FEET

Undefeated in the preliminary rounds of the Night Series, it looked as though Perth S.C. were in for a barnstorming season but they stumbled at the semi-final stage to Inglewood United and have been patchy in the League.

"I think it was good luck more than good management or good form early in the Night Series," coach Graham Normanton explained.

"It's been a building process for me. We've signed quite a few players and it's a question of getting it together ... I think now we're starting to really gel as a team," he said prior to Perth's recent 4-nil hammering of Fremantle City.

Leaders lose their 100% record in ACT

While Monaro and Bel United keep up pressure

By Nick Guoth

There was only one change to the table following the games played on the weekend. Tuggeranong United dropped two places to fourth allowing Monaro to move up to second place yet still five points adrift of run-away leaders Gungahlin Juventus even though Juventus lost their 100% record.

Wet and slippery conditions met Canberra Olympic and the Burns Club in their round seven match at Majura Oval writes Kyle McGarrigle.

The opening 25 minutes was an even affair, with neither side dominating the other.

The remaining 20 minutes of the first half however saw Canberra Olympic dictate the terms of the match, creating many opportunities, however they were unable to capitalise.

Burns Club were staying the match with some good defence, but they did not look like scoring, only troubling Olympic's goal keeper once in the first half.

With heavy rain falling at the beginning of the second half it didn't take too long for Olympic to put away their first goal. Eight minutes in Elia Salloum

received the ball down the right flank, and beautifully moved the ball closer to the goal and placed it in the back of the net from a very difficult angle.

With a 1-0 lead Canberra Olympic kept attacking Burns, however as in the first half, they could not take advantage of their opportunities. Although Burns defence was strong and kept Olympic scoreless for the rest of the half.

Burns did try hard very late in the half to put away an equaliser, however Olympic rallied and held their lead.

The stand out player for Canberra Olympic was Elia Salloum, scoring the only goal, and creating many opportunities down the right side of the field.

Robert Grande also had a very strong game in the middle.

Burns goal keeper Jimmy Carr had another strong game, making some fine saves and therefore giving his side a chance for victory.

A disappointed Burns coach Steve Bryant was happy that his team kept the score line so close.

"We got a soccer lesson, it was like a training session for us. We just ran around chasing shadows all afternoon."

Canberra Olympic coach Baz Giampaolo wasn't entirely pleased with his teams effort.

"At the end of the day, we had a lot of possession and probably could have put away a few more goals."

Monaro were forced to work hard to defeat a tenacious University of Canberra team, 2-1, at Riverside stadium on Sunday writes Nathan Long.

The game was tough and physical, and played in conditions that varied from sunny and fine, to overcast and raining. Uni dominated possession in the first half, controlling the ball through the mid-field well. Utah Nirvana and Simon Foxhill were the standouts through the first half hour, making a number of breaks and half-chances.

Uni had a good chance in the 22nd minute when from a goal clearance, mid-fielder Dominic Bartone gathered the ball and dribbled up-field. He crossed to the right side to Foxhill, whose shot was blocked by Monaro keeper Ian Jeffries. Two minutes after that, a dangerous cross by Nirvana failed to find Foxhill near the far post.

In the 27th minute, Jeffries had to come out of his area to make a tackle on Tim Podlesak, who beat and offside trap following a good pass from Foxhill.

In the 40th minute, Uni defender Steve Howe was cautioned for

handballing a Darryl North shot at goal. A penalty kick was awarded and it seemed Monaro would take the lead. However, John Rakic missed the penalty to the left and the teams went into halftime tied at 0-0.

Uni had got the majority of possession through good control and Monaro errors, although the home team looked to be creating better goal scoring opportunities. Uni's problem was a complete lack of finishing.

Monaro came out with renewed vigour and posted the opening goal in the 52nd minute. At the right-hand edge of the penalty area, Lazar Simeonov passes down the line to Danny Macor, who crossed to John Rakic in front of goal. Rakic volleyed the cross into the left side of the net for a 1-0 lead.

Two minutes later Bartone took a free kick at about centre field, 30 metres out. This went high towards Foxhill on the right side of goal.

Foxhill leapt to meet the ball, but his looping header landed on the crossbar.

In the 66th minute, Monaro went 2-0 up through Rakic's second goal. Uni keeper Michael McKenna leapt to grab a ball, but a mid-air collision with a group of players caused him to spill the ball. Rakic swooped on the crumbs and punched the ball in past the outstretched left arm of McKenna.

Two minutes after that, following a dangerous tackle by Bartone, Danny Macor sent a free kick which looped dangerously towards goal, but McKenna just managed to tap the ball over the crossbar.

The next 15 minutes saw Monaro creating chances and taking shots almost at will, but while the Uni defence bent, it did not break. In the 89th minute, Paul Macor brought down Michael Seleke in the penalty area, and a penalty kick was duly awarded.

Seleke kicked the ball straight into the left post and it rebounded to Bartone. Bartone couldn't capitalize on the open goal, and pushed his shot wide right.

In the 92nd minute, Uni sub Andrew Wilson had the ball on the Monaro back line, to the right of goals. He crossed to Andrew Rankine, whose shot rebounded off the near post and past Jeffries into the net.

With the score now 2-1, Monaro held out for a frantic sixty seconds before full-time to win 2-1.

Monaro coach Jimmy Bland stressed that patience was the key for his side in the second half.

"We didn't show enough patience in the first half. I told them at halftime to be more patient and to keep working. All the good teams are patient, and we ended up winning," he said.

Uni coach Tony Brennan was happy with the effort of his players, despite the loss.

"If you don't create any chances, you are going to get pumped."

But the boys went out there and created some very good chances, especially in the first half, but our finishing just wasn't there... Nonetheless, I'm proud of the way they played," he said.

Meanwhile at Jamison Oval the Capital City Suns took the first points off Gungahlin Juventus when they fought back to draw 1-1.

After a slow start the game livened up following Juventus' goal just before the break. Niall Stoddart scored the goal for

Juventus with Peter Hader converting a penalty for the Suns ten minutes from the end to level the scores. Juventus had more chances throughout the game but good keeping from Mick Kirkham kept them in the game.

In the other major game of the day Canberra Deakin came out firing in the first half and three goals against the slope and the wind at Kambah number 2 Oval was enough to get up over Tuggeranong United. Tuggeranong came back in the second half but were unable to convert any chances.

Tony Lemezina scored the first two goals. His opening score was a nice volley off the upright and his second came from the spot. Paul Ivanic netted the other with a header from a Luka Udjur cross.

Woden Park was the venue for the match between Weston Creek Royals and Belconnen United. The team from the North were just too good for Weston eventually taking the game out 4-0.

For Belconnen Scott Manson scored a hatrick with Marko Perinovic opening the scoring. Weston tried hard a generated a couple of good chances, but were too in-experienced allowing Belconnen some soft goals.

PREMIER LEAGUE 1ST GRADE:

Tuggeranong United 0
Canberra Deakin 3,

Gungahlin Juventus 1
Capital City Suns 1

Canberra Olympic 1
Burns FC 0

Monaro 2
UCU Pumas 1

Weston Creek Royals 0
Belconnen United 4

TABLE:

Gungahlin Juventus 20
Monaro 15
Belconnen United 14
Tuggeranong United 14
Canberra Deakin 12
Canberra Olympic 11
Capital City Suns 8
Burns FC 3
University of Canberra 3
Weston Creek Royals 2

PREMIER LEAGUE UNDER 23S:

Tuggeranong United 1
Canberra Deakin 2

Gungahlin Juventus 3
Capital City Suns 1

Weston Creek Royals 0
Belconnen United 5

PREMIER LEAGUE UNDER 19S:

Tuggeranong United 0
Canberra Deakin 1

Gungahlin Juventus 2
Capital City Suns 1

Weston Creek Royals 1
Belconnen United 2

Bill Turner Cup results

ROUND 1:

Trinity Grammar 1 Sydney Boys 0
Cambridge Park 4 St Pauls Penrith 0
Colo 6 Windsor 0
The Forest 3 Killarney Heights 1
Kempsey 3 St Pauls Kempsey 2
Macksville 9 Bowraville 0
WallSEND 3 Jesmond 2
Wodonga Catholic 3 Marian College 0

ROUND 2:

Epping Boys 9 St Pius X 1
Narrabeen 2 St Augustine 1
All Saints Lakemba 3 Moriah College 0
Northmead 3 Girraween 2
Blacktown Boys 5 Plumpton 3
East Hills Boys 5 St Euphemia College 2
Cabramatta 7 James Busby 2
Bossley Park 5 Fairvale 0
John Thierry 4 Lurnea 3
Eliz Macarthur 2 Airds 0
Dubbo 2 St Johns Dubbo 1
Cootamundra 4 Tumut 0
Lowood 3 Laidley 0
Westside Christian 3 Ipswich Grammar 0
Rivermount 3 Windaroo Valley 2
Beaudesert 5 Boonah 1

Donev inspires awesome Demons

In this top of the table NSW Super League clash there was only one side that looked title material. That was Brian Brown's Blacktown who steam-rolled the Bonnyrigg White Eagles to the tune of four goals to one at the Serbian Centre on the weekend. And it was their signing from Victoria who did most of the damage on what was a dark day for the White Eagles.



Blacktown's Damien Foxe: another good performer for City.

New signing Zlatko Donev, from VPL powerhouse Green Gully, helped the Demons to this fine victory, and one which puts them as firm favourites with the bookies for another championship.

Donev has not played in a losing team this year, quite a remarkable feat.

It wasn't just the goals that made him stand out - he scored two together with Paul Dee and, of course, Mark Hagger - rather the way he held up the ball under pressure until his teammates could receive the ball.

Knowing that a win in this game would see Blacktown leapfrog their opponents on the table, City began in furious fashion, going two up before anyone knew what the hell was going on.

Damien Brown's lofted pass was cleverly controlled by the chest of Jason Bennett, deep in Eagles territory, and he played it into the path of the on-running Donev whose attempt was blocked, leaving Marvelous Mark Hagger to score.

Then by the time the inquest in the defence had barely finished when little Paul Dee crossed for Donev who headed in to the net for a beautiful second.

The Eagles however steadied somewhat with David Reid, brother of Wolves Paul, and Javier Mancino excelling, however their profligate finishing, from the likes of those two plus Hawrysiuk, Ghisso and Luff, cost them any chance of a revival.

On 33 minutes what began disas-

trously became a nightmare for the home side when Brown's corner was fumbled by Sasha Bozic in goal and in the resultant stramash Paul Dee slotted home for his first ever goal for City.

The journeyman now joins his teammates, all of whom have scored for the Demons.

Four minutes after the break the excellent Reid set up Hawrysiuk who in turn centred for goal machine Johnny Ghisso and the striker headed past Greco in the Demons goal. 1-3 to Demons but that was the best it was going to get for the home side.

Sensing a comeback the clinical City forged ahead to kill off the game, this they did on 70 minutes. Sub Chris Bradley sent the ball out to Bennett, and the former Breaker fired a diagonal ball into the path of Donev, who capped his man of the match show by slamming the ball home from just inside the area.

And that's how it ended. 4-1 to the visiting Blacktown City.

Starting line-ups.

Bonnyrigg: Bozic, Green, Dragas, Reid, Mancino, Devrimol, Harding, Hawrysiuk, Van Bentum, Luff, Ghisso.

Blacktown: Greco, Foxe, Langan, Riches, Yates, Brown, Sermanni, Dee, Donev, Bennett, Hagger.



Zlatko Donev: formerly of Gully in the VPL now playing for Demons in NSW.

Super League Summary

At Lambert Park on Sunday, Leichhardt escaped with a draw after a revitalised Canterbury Marrickville skipped away to a 2-0 lead in the first half through goals from Jim Nikas and Abbas Saad.

Jason Lal and Vuko Tomasevic managed to score for Leichhardt to keep their premiership ambitions well and truly alive. For Canterbury, the draw may well

Super League top scorers

MARK HAGGER	BLACKTOWN	19
STEVE KARAVATAKIS	LEICHHARDT	16
COLIN LUFF	BONNYRIGG	16
JOHNNY GHISSO	BONNYRIGG	16
JIMMY ASCHNER	EASTS	15
JOHNNY GHISSO	BONNYRIGG	16
ADAM ANDERSON	PARRAMATTA	14
MATTHEW BORG	FAIRFIELD	13
JIM BAKIS	ST GEORGE	12



Mark Hagger: now 19 goals for the season.

put their hopes of making the finals beyond reach unless they can turn on a string of victories over the next seven weeks.

After coach Ljube Jancev was asked to resign during the week, Bankstown City recorded their first home win of the season in defeating Eastern Suburbs 4-1 at Jensen Park under new coach Billy McColl.

Fairfield Bulls also defeated the hapless Manly Warringah by the same scoreline and are finally living up to the expectations many had of them at the beginning of the season.

Parramatta Eagles maintained their record as the 'leading drawers' in Super League by recording their 10th draw from

19 games, with a 0-0 result against Macarthur at Lynwood Park. Of all the teams in the current top 5, their position appears most vulnerable.

After a scoreless first half at Seymour Shaw Park, the crowd was treated to five goals in 26 minutes. Penrith raced to a 3-0 lead with goals to Danny Hinton, Martin Driene and Allan Picken, for Sutherland then to turn on the tap with goals from the lightning fast Ali Salim and Kris Karanasos - but too late to take the three points away from the visitors.

St George had an unexpected loss at home to Central Coast, going down 2-1.

SUPER LEAGUE SOCCER

THIS SUNDAY AFTERNOON 21 MAY AT

MELITA STADIUM

PARRAMATTA EAGLES

V

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE

SEE SUPER LEAGUE'S SUPER EAGLES TAKE ON THE BERRIES

FIRST GRADE 3PM - UNDER 21 1PM - UNDER 18 11AM

ADULTS \$10 - STUDENT & PENSIONERS \$5
KIDS UNDER 16 \$2

DIVISION 1: FIRST GRADE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Dulwich Hill	11	8	3	0	22	7	27	15
Hajduk Wanderers	11	7	1	3	17	9	22	8
Rockdale City Suns	11	6	1	4	23	16	19	7
M.S.C. Liverpool	11	5	4	2	17	13	19	4
AC United	10	5	2	3	16	11	17	5
Stanmore Hawks	10	4	2	4	15	16	14	-1
Fraser Park	11	3	4	4	20	15	13	5
Hurstville City	11	3	4	4	16	16	13	0
Illawarra Lions	11	3	3	5	12	15	12	-3
Auburn United	10	3	3	4	14	18	12	-4
Bathurst '75	11	2	2	7	13	32	8	-19
Ryde City Gunners	10	0	1	9	9	26	1	-17

DIVISION 1: RESERVES	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Hajduk Wanderers	11	7	4	0	36	4	25	32
AC United	10	6	3	1	29	9	21	20
Dulwich Hill	11	6	1	4	27	17	19	10
Fraser Park	11	4	5	2	22	16	17	6
M.S.C. Liverpool	11	4	5	2	17	12	17	5
Stanmore Hawks	10	4	4	2	25	9	16	16
Ryde City Gunners	10	5	1	4	19	14	16	5
Auburn United	10	4	1	5	15	22	13	-7
Hurstville City	11	3	3	5	22	14	12	8
Bathurst '75	11	2	4	5	19	25	10	-6
Rockdale City Suns	11	3	1	7	13	31	10	-18
Illawarra Lions	11	0	0	11	5	76	0	-71

DIVISION 1: U18's	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
M.S.C. Liverpool	11	8	1	2	37	11	25	26
Hajduk Wanderers	11	7	3	1	23	10	24	13
Ryde City Gunners	10	7	1	2	33	10	22	23
Stanmore Hawks	10	6	3	1	25	4	21	21
AC United	10	6	3	1	28	12	21	16
Rockdale City Suns	11	6	3	2	22	15	21	7
Dulwich Hill	11	5	0	6	13	23	15	-10
Bathurst '75	11	3	2	6	24	20	11	4
Fraser Park	11	3	1	7	28	23	10	5
Hurstville City	11	3	1	7	12	23	10	-11
Auburn United	10	1	0	9	10	57	3	-47
Illawarra Lions	11	0	0	11	9	56	0	-47

DIVISION 2: FIRST GRADE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Greystanes	10	9	1	0	30	6	28	24
Hurstville ZSC	11	6	3	2	20	12	21	8
Mt Pritchard	10	6	1	3	14	9	19	5
Sydney University	10	5	2	3	25	15	17	10
Belmore Hercules	9	5	0	4	16	17	15	-1
Hakoah	10	4	1	5	24	22	13	2
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	9	3	4	2	17	17	13	0
Hills United	10	4	0	6	15	13	12	2
University Of NSW	11	3	3	5	14	17	12	-3
White City	11	3	2	6	25	25	11	0
Central Coast Lakers	9	3	0	6	14	23	9	-9
Sydney District	10	0	1	9	8	46	1	-38

DIVISION 2: RESERVES	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Mt Pritchard	10	7	2	1	25	7	23	18
Hurstville ZSC	10	7	1	2	25	13	22	12
Sydney University	10	6	3	1	30	15	21	15
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	9	5	2	2	18	13	17	5
Hills United	9	3	6	0	23	7	15	16
Belmore Hercules	9	4	2	3	18	14	14	4
Central Coast Lakers	9	3	2	4	12	15	11	-3
University Of NSW	11	3	2	6	21	26	11	-5
Greystanes	10	2	4	4	19	15	10	4
Hakoah	10	2	3	5	21	25	9	-4
Sydney District	10	2	0	8	11	55	6	-44
White City	11	0	3	8	15	33	3	-18

DIVISION 2: U18's	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Mt Pritchard	10	8	2	0	28	8	26	20
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	10	7	3	0	21	4	24	17
Belmore Hercules	10	5	2	3	20	16	17	4
Hills United	9	5	1	3	14	11	16	3
Hurstville ZSC	9	5	0	4	22	12	15	10
Sydney University	9	3	3	3	11	8	12	3
Central Coast Lakers	9	3	3	3	15	14	12	1
Greystanes	10	3	1	6	12	21	10	-9
Hakoah	10	2	3	5	11	17	9	-6
University Of NSW	11	2	3	6	11	25	9	-14
Sydney District	9	1	2	6	11	24	5	-13
White City	8	1	1	6	11	27	4	-16

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Northern NSW/HAS	12	9	1	2	47	11	28	36
Marconi	12	8	2	2	50	8	26	42
Sutherland Sharks	12	8	2	2	30	10	26	20
NSW Inst Sport/Acad.	11	7	1	3	26	10	22	16
Central Coast Lakers	11	5	2	4	17	30	17	-13
Manly Warringah Delp.	11	4	3	4	22	15	15	7
Wollongong Wolves	12	3	3	6	12	25	12	-13
Nepean Association	12	3	0	9	14	38	9	-24
Gladesville Ravens	11	1	3	7	7	34	6	-27
Macarthur Rams	12	1	1	10	5	49	4	-44

NSW RESULTS

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE: FIRST GRADE: Rockdale City Suns 0 MSC Liverpool 2 (B Hewitt 29m F Scarpis 70m), Dulwich Hill 1 (L Dounis 82m) Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Auburn United 0 Hajduk Wanderers 2 (J Anderson 5/69m), Illawarra Lions 2 (D Tosevski 52m S Kotevski 65m) Ryde City Gunners 0, AC United 2 (J Mellissourgos 67m S Cevinini 89m) Bathurst '75 (G Wallace 77m B Crawley 86m P Clancey 88m), Fraser Park 1 (J Palapanis 81m) Stanmore Hawks 1 (A Laca 53m). **UNDER 21:** Rockdale City Suns 0 MSC Liverpool 0, Dulwich Hill 0 Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Auburn United 1 Hajduk Wanderers 2, Illawarra Lions 0 Ryde City Gunners 1, AC United 7 Bathurst '75 3, Fraser Park 1 Stanmore Hawks 1. **UNDER 18:** Rockdale City Suns 3 MSC Liverpool 2, Dulwich Hill 1 Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Auburn United 0 Hajduk Wanderers 5, Illawarra Lions 1 Ryde City Gunners 3, AC United 2 Bathurst '75 1, Fraser Park 0 Stanmore Hawks 3.

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO: FIRST GRADE: Belmore Hercules 0 Hurstville ZSC 1, Greystanes 2 University of NSW 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2 Hakoah 1, Mt Pritchard 1 Hills United 0, Sydney District 0 Sydney University 5, Central Coast Lakers 2 White City 1. **UNDER 21:** Belmore Hercules 0 Hurstville ZSC 6, Greystanes 3 University of NSW 4, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 3 Hakoah 3, Mt Pritchard 1 Hills United 1, Sydney District 2 Sydney University 10, Central Coast Lakers 3 White City 2. **GRADE 18:** Belmore Hercules 2 Hurstville ZSC 1, Greystanes 4 University of NSW 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 3 Hakoah 0 (Forfeit), Mt Pritchard 5 Hills United 0, Sydney District 0 Sydney University 6, Central Coast Lakers 5 White City 1.

FEDERATION DIVISION THREE: FIRST GRADE: Balmain 3 Parramatta City 0, Trasandinos 1 Western Sydney Lions 3, The Wanderers 3 Prairiewood United 4, Colo Colo 5 Liverpool City 2, Prospect United 0 Nepean District 1, Holy Cross Ryde 1 Camden Tigers 4. **RESERVE GRADE:** Balmain 2 Parramatta City 0, Trasandinos 1 Western Sydney Lions 6, The Wanderers 3 Prairiewood United 0, Colo Colo 4 Liverpool City 1, Prospect United 0 Nepean District 1, Holy Cross Ryde 1 Camden Tigers 1.

FEDERATION DIVISION FOUR: FIRST GRADE: Sporting SCC 2 Sydney Crescent Star 5, Maroubra United 3 Sydney Crescent Star 5, Sporting SCC 1 Auburn Star 4, Granville Greenisland 4 Hawkesbury City 2, Marrickville 2 Springwood 1, United Eagles 3 CSI Schofields 1, Eastern Creek Pioneers 0 Kellyville Kolts 2. **RESERVE GRADE:** Sporting SCC 2 Sydney Crescent Star 4, Maroubra United 1 Sydney Crescent Star 1, Sporting SCC 2 Auburn Star 0, Granville Greenisland 1 Hawkesbury City 3, Marrickville 1 Springwood 0, United Eagles 9 CSI Schofields 1, Eastern Creek Pioneers 0 Kellyville Kolts 0.

FEDERATION DIVISION FIVE: FIRST GRADE: Birrong Sports 2 Liverpool Olympic 5, Kosciusko 1 Lithgow Workmen 1, Petersham 1 Bossy 1, Birrong Sports 5 Hinchinbrook Juniors 0, Fairfield City 2 Liverpool Olympic 0, Western Sydney Passion 1 UTS 13. **RESERVE GRADE:** Birrong Sports 2 Liverpool Olympic 5, Kosciusko 3 Lithgow Workmen 1, Petersham 1 Bossy 1, Birrong Sports 3 Hinchinbrook Juniors 0 (Forfeit), Fairfield City 1 Liverpool Olympic 2, Western Sydney Passion 1 UTS 2.

WOMENS SUPER LEAGUE: FIRST GRADE: Manly Warringah Dolphins 6 Macarthur Rams 1, Marconi 1 Northern NSW/HAS 0, Nepean Association 0 NSW Academy 3, Central Coast Lakers 1 Sutherland Sharks 0, Gladesville Ravens 1 Wollongong Wolves 3. **GRADE 21:** Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Macarthur Rams 0, Marconi 2 Northern NSW/HAS 1, Central Coast Lakers 0 Sutherland Sharks 2, Gladesville Ravens 2 Wollongong Wolves 2.

WOMENS STATE LEAGUE: FIRST GRADE: St George Association 0, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 2, UTS 3 Roselands Raptors 2, CSI Schofields 0 St George Association 4, Inter Lions 0 Hajduk Wanderers 3. **GRADE 19:** St George Association 5 Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 3, UTS 3 Roselands Raptors 1, CSI Schofields 0 St George Association 2, Inter Lions 0 Hajduk Wanderers 5.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0 Sutherland Sharks 4, Northern Spirit 0 Sutherland Sharks 2, Sydney 0 Fairfield Bulls 1, Sydney Olympic 6 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Marconi Stallions 1 Bankstown City 1, Leichhardt Tigers 3 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Blacktown City Demons 1, St George 0 Central Coast Coasties 1, Penrith Panthers 3 Canterbury Marrickville 0, Macarthur Rams 1 Newcastle Breakers 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Wollongong Wolves 4. **GRADE 14:** Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Sutherland Sharks 2, Northern Spirit 1 Sutherland Sharks 0, Sydney United 1 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney Olympic 5 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 2, Marconi Stallions 2 Bankstown City 0, Leichhardt Tigers 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 0, Parramatta Eagles 0 Blacktown City Demons 1, St George 4 Central Coast Coasties 0, Penrith Panthers 1 Canterbury Marrickville 3, Macarthur Rams 0 Newcastle Breakers 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0 Wollongong Wolves 4. **GRADE 15:** Northern Spirit 1 Sutherland Sharks 1, Sydney United 4 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney Olympic 3 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 2, Marconi Stallions 2 Bankstown City 0, Leichhardt Tigers 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Blacktown City Demons 1, St George 0 Central Coast Coasties 1, Penrith Panthers 3 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Macarthur Rams 2 Newcastle Breakers 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Wollongong Wolves 0. **GRADE 16:** Northern Spirit 0 Sutherland Sharks 0, Sydney United 0 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney Olympic 7 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Marconi Stallions 5 Bankstown City 1, Leichhardt Tigers 3 Manly Warringah Dolphins 0, Parramatta Eagles 0 Blacktown City Demons 0, St George 3 Central Coast Coasties 0, Penrith Panthers 5 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Macarthur Rams 2 Newcastle Breakers 3, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Wollongong Wolves 3.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: Southern Branch 2 Nepean Association 1, Blacktown Association 0 Rockdale City Suns 0, Ryde City 3 AC United 1, Hills United 3 Illawarra Lions 0, Stanmore Hawks 0 Mt Pritchard 2, Canterbury Association 0 Hajduk Wanderers 5, Nepean Association 2 Canterbury Association 0. **GRADE 14:** Southern Branch 1 Nepean Association 2, Blacktown Association 7 Rockdale City Suns 0, Ryde City 2 AC United 1, Hills United 0 Illawarra Lions 1, Stanmore Hawks 0 Mt Pritchard 1, Canterbury Association 0 Hajduk Wanderers 0, Nepean Association 2 Canterbury Association 0. **GRADE 15:** Southern Branch 4 Nepean Association 1, Blacktown Association 0 Rockdale City Suns 1, Ryde City 4 AC United 3, Hills United 0 Illawarra Lions 2, Stanmore Hawks 2 Mt Pritchard 0, Canterbury Association 2 Hajduk Wanderers 5, Nepean Association 1 Canterbury Association 4. **GRADE 16:** Southern Branch 5 Nepean Association 0, Blacktown Association 5 Rockdale City Suns 0, Ryde City 0 AC United 2, Hills United 0 Illawarra Lions 3, Stanmore Hawks 1 Mt Pritchard 1, Canterbury Association 1 Hajduk Wanderers 4, Nepean Association 2 Canterbury Association 2.

DIVISION TWO YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: Camden Tigers 2 Parramatta City 0, Central Coast Lakers 5 Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0, CSI Schofields 2 MSC Liverpool 0, Granville Association 2 Ku-Ring-Gai Association 5, Hurstville City 1 Hawkesbury City 4. **GRADE 14:** Camden Tigers 4 Parramatta City 0, Central Coast Lakers 2 Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, CSI Schofields 3 MSC Liverpool 1, Granville Association 1 Ku-Ring-Gai Association 8, Hurstville City 0 Hawkesbury City 1. **GRADE 15:** Camden Tigers 1 Parramatta City 2, Central Coast Lakers 5 Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2, CSI Schofields 1 MSC Liverpool 2, Granville Association 2 Ku-Ring-Gai Association 1, Hurstville City 1 Hawkesbury City 4, Camden Tigers 1 Parramatta City 2, Central Coast Lakers 0 Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0, CSI Schofields 1 MSC Liverpool 1, Granville Association 0 Ku-Ring-Gai Association 3, Hurstville City 2 Hawkesbury City 3.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE: GRADE 11: Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0 Macarthur Rams 2, Northern Spirit 0 Sutherland Sharks 4, Sydney United 5 Fairfield Bulls 1, Sydney Olympic 2 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Marconi Stallions 3 Bankstown City Cubs 1, Leichhardt Tigers 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Blacktown City Demons 1, St George 1 Central Coast Coasties 3, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0 Wollongong Wolves 4, Penrith Panthers 6 Canterbury Marrickville 1. **GRADE 12:** Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Macarthur Rams 2, Northern Spirit 1 Sutherland Sharks 1, Sydney United 3 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sydney Olympic 6 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Marconi Stallions 1 Bankstown City Cubs 1, Leichhardt Tigers 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 0, Parramatta Eagles 1 Blacktown City Demons 3, St George 1 Central Coast Coasties 3, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0 Wollongong Wolves 4, Penrith Panthers 0 Canterbury Marrickville 3.

CADET LEAGUE DIVISION ONE: GRADE 11: Mt Pritchard 2 MDSFA Cadets 3, Stanmore Hawks 0 Parramatta City 2, AC United 0 CSI Schofields 0, Mt Pritchard 1 AC United 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0 Central Coast Lakers 1, M.S.C. Liverpool 1 CSI Schofields 1, Illawarra Lions 4 Hajduk Wanderers 0, Hurstville City 1 Hawkesbury City 2, Ryde City 3 Rockdale City Suns 0, M.D.S.F.A. Cadets 2 Hills United 0. **GRADE 12:** Mt Pritchard 0 MDSFA Cadets 1, Stanmore Hawks 0 Parramatta City 1, AC United 2 CSI Schofields 2, Mt Pritchard 0 AC United 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0 Central Coast Lakers 7, M.S.C. Liverpool 1 CSI Schofields 4, Illawarra Lions 3 Hajduk Wanderers 0, Hurstville City 1 Hawkesbury City 1, Ryde City 0 Rockdale City Suns 0, M.D.S.F.A. Cadets 3 Hills United 0.

McColl's arrival sparks Lions into action

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 4

McDonald 19, 70, Trposki 62, Issa 64.

EASTERN SUBURBS 1

Shepherd 4.

Sunday afternoon at Jensen Park, Sydney.



into the path of Matt Shepherd, and the defender coolly slotted the ball under Bankstown keeper Zlatko Joseski to make it 1-1.

East came out firing after the break, and for a while Bankstown were on the ropes.

Big Vadim Mikoutski, recently back from Europe, began to show a little of his undoubted class with a series of gliding runs down the middle of the park.

Rudi Jerkovic missed a golden chance to put the visitors in front in the 58th minute when he was unable to control a perfect cross from Deighan, firing high over the bar.

It proved to be the turning point of the match. The next passage of play saw Trposki score with a well-placed header, after the Wanderers failed to clear a corner.

Issa crowned a man-of-the-match performance with a superb goal in the 64th minute. He single-handedly harassed the Easts defence into conceding possession, then advanced and drilled an unstoppable 18-yard shot into the back of the net to make it 3-1.

McDonald took advantage of some slack marking to wrap it up in the 70th, finishing off a Nabil Codmani cross after more fine play from Issa.

The action switched quickly from end to end as the clock wound down. Issa had time to fire a couple of shots wide, and Mikoutski drew a fine save from Joseski in the 79th with a cracking shot on the turn.

Easts substitute Axel Loreu should have added a second in injury time, but Joseski got the better of him in a one-on-one situation.

Bankstown remain in ninth position on the league table after their victory, but much satisfaction will be taken from the breaking of the home ground hoodoo.

Best for the Lions were the irrepressible Issa, composed sweeper Richard Luksic and Hossam Nouh. For Eastern Suburbs, Yavuz Ekinci did well in his attacking midfield role.

BANKSTOWN CITY: Joseski, Nouh, Trpcovski, Luksic, Grozdanovski, Codmani, Issa, Trposki (Lozevski 84), McDonald (Talevski 84), Lemazina (Maslinkoski 90), Kanaan.

EASTERN SUBURBS: Anastasiadis, Segreto, Dihm, Sharpley, Shepherd, Ekinci, Jerkovic (Alexopoulos 71), McComb (Pillemer 77), Nicholls, Deighan (Loreu 84), Mikoutski.

Super League Tables

FIRST GRADE:	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS	18	13	2	3	53	16	41	37
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	19	13	0	6	52	36	39	16
Leichhardt Tigers	18	11	3	4	41	28	36	13
St George Saints	18	10	3	5	32	22	33	10
Parramatta Eagles	19	7	10	2	39	27	31	12
Central Coast Coasties	18	7	6	5	30	23	27	7
Fairfield Bulls	19	8	3	8	35	31	27	4
Canterbury Marrickville	19	8	1	10	29	42	25	-13
Bankstown City Lions	19	6	5	8	27	28	23	-1
Eastern Subs Wanderers	19	6	1	12	32	45	19	-13
Macarthur Rams	19	4	6	9	21	28	18	-7
Penrith Panthers	18	5	3	10	21	43	18	-22
Sutherland Sharks	19	4	3	12	23	47	15	-24
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	2	6	10	19	38	12	-19

UNDER 21	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS	18	12	4	2	45	20	40	25
Central Coast Coasties	18	12	2	4	35	18	38	17
Penrith Panthers	18	10	1	7	32	25	31	7
Leichhardt Tigers	18	9	3	6	36	25	30	11
Parramatta Eagles	19	7	5	7	25	24	26	1
Eastern Subs Wanderers	19	7	5	7	29	33	26	-4
Macarthur Rams	19	7	3	9	25	33	24	-8
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	19	6	5	8	32	31	23	1
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	7	2	9	34	38	23	-4
Canterbury Marrickville	19	7	2	10	30	39	23	-9
Sutherland Sharks	19	6	5	8	28	40	23	-12
St George Saints	18	6	4	8	28	31	22	-3
Fairfield Bulls	19	6	4	9	31	39	22	-8
Bankstown City Lions	19	3	5	11	32	46	14	-14

UNDER 18	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
FAIRFIELD BULLS	19	14	1	4	38	20	43	18
Parramatta Eagles	19	13	3	3	53	22	42	31
Leichhardt Tigers	17	12	2	3	40	23	38	17
Blacktown City Demons	18	10	6	2	33	15	36	18
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	19	8	4	7	30	29	28	1
Central Coast Coasties	18	8	3	7	35	24	27	11
Macarthur Rams	18	7	6	5	28	22	27	6
Sutherland Sharks	19	7	5	7	29	25	26	4
Penrith Panthers	18	5	8	5	31	24	23	7
Bankstown City Lions	19	6	3	10	26	36	21	-10
Eastern Subs Wanderers	19	5	5	9	27	45	20	-18
St George Saints	18	3	5	10	22	52	14	-30
Manly Warringah Dolphins	18	3	2	13	17	34	11	-17
Canterbury Marrickville	19	0	3	16	11	49	3	-38

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND TWENTY



Official clothing supplier to the NSW Soccer Federation



Saturday 20 May

Sutherland Sharks v St George Saints - Seymour Shaw

Games 7.00pm (1st grade) - 5.00pm (21s) - 3.00pm (18s)

Central Coast Coasties v Bonnyrigg W. E. - Plum Park

Games 6.00pm (1st grade) - 4.00pm (21s) - 2.00pm (18s)

Blacktown City v Macarthur Rams - Gabbie Stadium

Games 6.00pm (1st grade) - 4.00pm (21s) - 2.00pm (18s)

Sunday 21 May

Parramatta Eagles v Canterbury M'ville - Melita Stadium

Games 3.00pm (1st grade) - 1.00pm (21s) - 11.00am (18s)

Fairfield Bulls v Penrith Panthers - Nineveh Field

Games 3.00pm (1st grade) - 1.00pm (21s) - 11.00am (18s)

Eastern Suburbs v Manly Warringah - Wentworth Park

Games 3.00pm (1st grade) - 1.00pm (21s) - 11.00am (18s)

Bankstown City Lions v Leichhardt Tigers - Jensen Park

Games 3.00pm (1st grade) - 1.00pm (21s) - 11.00am (18s)

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SUPER LEAGUE RESULTS

FIRST GRADE

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 1

(J Ghiso 50m)

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 4

(M Hagger 1m Z Donev 3/70m P Dee 33m)

MACARTHUR RAMS 0

PARRAMATTA EAGLES 0

ST GEORGE SAINTS 1

(J Bakis 80m pen.)

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES 2

(N Byrne 14m A Peatey 64m)

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 2

(J Lal 67m V Tomasevic 77m)

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE BERRIES 2

(J Nikas 29m A Saad 32m)

SUTHERLAND SHARKS 2

(A Salim 75m K Karanasos 79m)

PENRITH PANTHERS 3

(D Hinton 53m M Driene 60m A Picken 69m)

MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS 1

(D Webb 66m)

FAIRFIELD BULLS 4

(D Iocca 13m G Zabetakis 81m D Huseyin 87m M Borg 89m)

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 4

(I McDonald 19/70m G Trposki 62m G Issa 64m)

EASTERN SUBURBS WANDERERS 1

M Shepherd 47m)

UNDER 21:

Blacktown City Demons 2

Bonnyrigg W. Eagles 1

Macarthur Rams 0

St George Saints 1

Leichhardt Tigers 0

Sutherland Sharks 2

Manly Warringah Dolphins 1

Bankstown City Lions 0

UNDER 18:

Blacktown City Demons 1

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1

Macarthur Rams 0

St George Saints 0

Leichhardt Tigers 1

Sutherland Sharks 2

Manly Warringah Dolphins 0

Bankstown City Lions 0

Leichhardt Tigers 1

Blacktown City 4

Parramatta Eagles 0

Central Coast 3

Canterbury M'ckville 2

Penrith Panthers 1

Fairfield Bulls 3

Eastern Suburbs 1

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

FIRST GRADE:

Manly Warringah Dolphins 6

Marconi 1

Nepean Association 0

Central Coast Lakers 1

Gladesville Ravens 1

GRADE 21:

Manly Warringah Dolphins 2

Marconi 2

Central Coast Lakers 0

Gladesville Ravens 2

Macarthur Rams 1

Northern NSW/HAS 0

NSW Academy 3

Sutherland Sharks 0

Wollongong Wolves 3

Macarthur Rams 0

Northern NSW/HAS 1

Sutherland Sharks 2

Wollongong Wolves 2

Cal Roper: another one to watch

Super Soccer writer Mark Fowler, was watching a Central Coast Coasties a few weeks ago and asked 'who's the kid with the pony tail'. When told he was only eighteen and just been promoted to the first team squad, Fowler remarked 'he's not bad'. With respect to Fowler, he's very, very good.

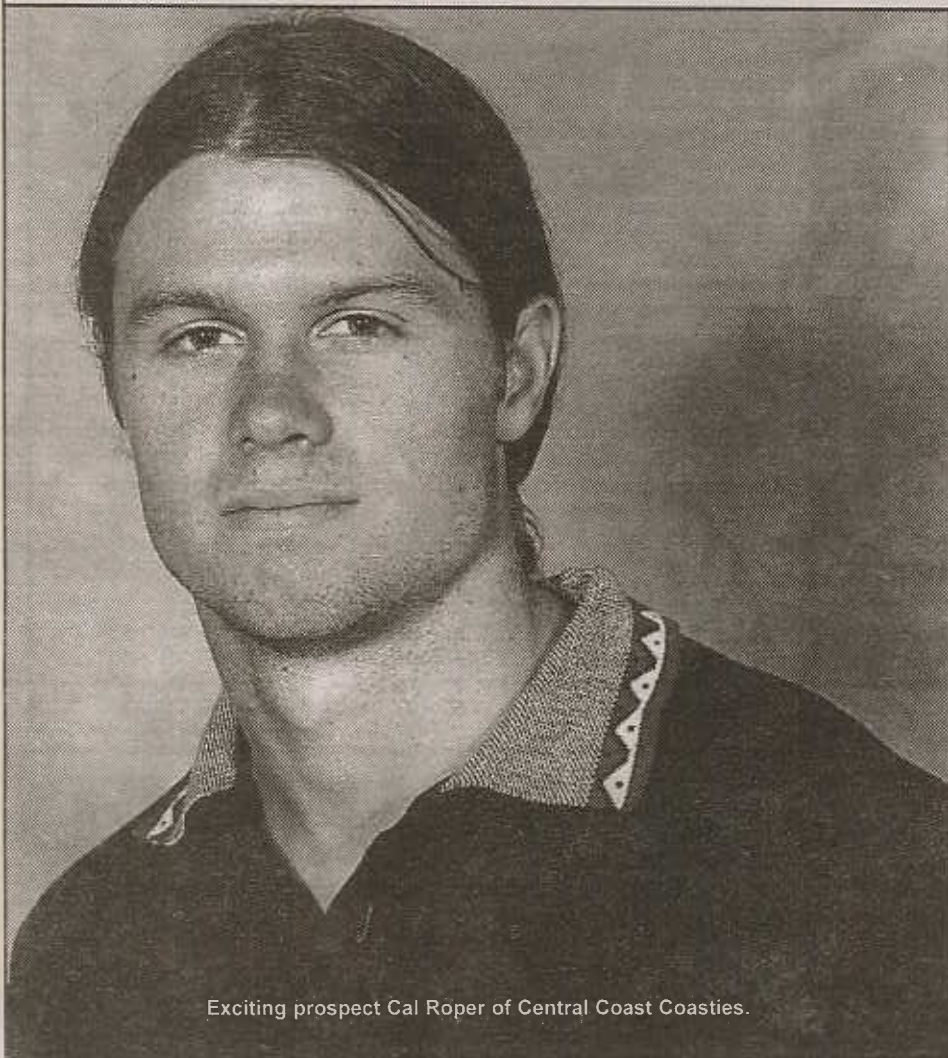
Cal Roper has lived on the Central Coast of NSW since he was seven year of age.

He first played soccer in the East Gosford under 8 team and for the next two years he lined-up with Terrigal along with the World Cup runners up Joeys' goalkeeper Jess Van Stratten and another up and coming Coasties player Daniel

squad of sixteen players. After a couple of games it was obvious that last season's problems were a thing of the past and first grade coach Dale Eggleton was quick to notice that he was showing all of his old abilities.

Roper was put in the first grade team as a 'bench player' for a ten matches coming on late in the game as a substitute, went back to the Under 21 team for a few matches, helped them consolidate their top of the table position, and then played his first full game for the top top team and scored the team's only goal in a disappointing loss to Sutherland.

He has been a starter ever since and in the 5-1 victory over Eastern Suburbs scored a goal that that any striker would



Exciting prospect Cal Roper of Central Coast Coasties.

Surridge.

At eleven years of age he joined the Coasties, had a year away, went back to the Coasties for three years, transferred to Newcastle club Adamstown for one season playing under 16, then returned to the Coasties and has been there ever since.

He was also selected to train with the Central Coast Academy under former Coasties coach, Allan Bourke.

In 1998 and 1999 he played in the Coasties under 18 team in the NSW Super League. Last season his form seemed to slip and he spent most of the second half of the season on the substitutes bench.

Roper had always shown he had something special, aggression, never say die attitude and the ability to convert chances into goals but late last season he seemed to lose all this.

He would be the first to admit that things were not going right for him.

He returned for this season's Under 21 team trials and was selected in the

have been proud of when he coolly trapped a pass, saw the 'keeper off the line and chipped him from twelve metres out.



Last Saturday night even the NBN Central Coast television people, who film all Coasties matches, remarked as he was leaving the field - 'the young kid in the number 6 shirt is a goer!'

Roper seems to have it all. As Eggleton said at last Saturday night's 'man of the match' presentation, yes "the boy's' got unlimited talent, he just needs to convert a few more of the chances he's making for himself and he could become one of the best players the Central Coast has produced."

So beware all other Super League clubs, you have been warned - watch out for 'the kid with the pony tail in the number six shirt.'

Coasties win on the road

You could have bet on it - the Coasties, having played seven games in a row at home with only one win and four draws, played away and duly won.

The match was very even, very competitive and very exciting. The Coasties dominated for the first twenty minutes causing the St George defence many problems. Les Bihari was very busy in the home goal during this period keeping out several Coasties goal attempts and it was not surprising when a great move involving Shane Knight, Paul Roberts and Adam Peatey ended up with Nathan Byrn opening the scoring in the fourteenth minute.

These four players had been dominant and had been involved in most of the Coasties attacks up to this goal.

St George appeared to lift after the shock of having a goal scored against them and Jim Bakis made a number of dangerous runs but was not able to finish as is usually expected of him.

The game was pretty even for the balance of the first half with both defences solid and neither goalkeeper really tested.

The second half commenced at a rapid pace with Papagergiou shooting over the bar following a good St George move.

Soon after Knight put Peter Ritchie through only to see his shot end up safely in Bihari's arms.

St George immediately counter attacked and Gary Meier brilliantly tipped a vicious Bakis shot from 20 metres over the bar.

Bakis had another great opportunity two minutes later but shot just wide.

Shaun Matthews then put Byrn through and his overhead shot was well saved by Bihari.

St George was putting the Coasties defence under tremendous pressure but they withstood the challenge and after

twenty minutes of the second half Knight found Peatey on the edge of the St George penalty area. Peatey fought his way past three St George defenders and his lobbed shot left Bihari clutching for air and the Coasties were two up.

St George again raised their momentum and once again the Coasties were under pressure.

With then minutes to go the Saints were awarded a penalty. Bakis took the spot kick and although Meier went the right way the ball whizzed past him to put St George back in the game.

For the last ten minutes it was nearly all St George and with three minutes to go the ball was in the net but referee Greg Lenerton disallowed the goal for an obvious hand ball.

The Coasties defence was under great pressure but they showed a will to win not seen for many weeks and held out for a surprising but well deserved victory.

For St George, Bakis, as usual, was most dangerous but his usual deadly finishing let him down while Maglis and Augerinos - formerly of Sydney Olympic - put in excellent games.

The Coasties were well served by Byrn, who probably had his best match this season, whilst Peatey and Knight were always a danger up front.

A great game worthy of a far bigger crowd than what was in attendance.

ST GEORGE: Bihari, Maglis, Verrender (Leris), Bolianitis, Kladis, Petratos, Bakis, Augerinos, Galea Munoz, Papagergiou (Petrovski).

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES: Meier, Matthews, Steele (Hokin), Drysdale, Peatey, Knight, Daley, Byrn, Roberts (Roper), Ritchie, Sontag (Marshall).

Yellows:

Coasties: Drysdale, Knight.
Saints: Galea

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Alfonso Opazo: Back in business

By Mark Fisher

This week, in an Inside Soccer exclusive, we talk to Heidelberg's coach Jeff Olver as well as 22-year old star striker Alfonso Opazo, and discover how one of Victoria's powerhouse is returning to real form on the pitch.

MF: Alfonso, you have shown that no opposition defence in the Victorian Premier League is safe this season against your agility and deadly-accurate finishing. Have you always been a natural-born striker?

AO: Yes, I started off as a junior at the age of four years old, and ever since I began I've mainly been a striker. My father also played as a striker, in Chile as an amateur, but when he came to Australia at the age of eighteen he concentrated mainly on work, although he did once sign for Preston.

MF: Last season you and midfielder Cesar Hermosilla were playing with Sunshine George Cross, and both made the cross-town trip when the Georgies were relegated to Division 1. You had no problems scoring goals last season. Have you changed anything in your own game in order to allow you more goalscoring opportunities this season?

AO: I haven't really changed anything in particular, but I have worked harder with my training. Here at Heidelberg we train four nights a week whereas down at Sunshine we trained two nights a week. Plus I have added experience now, which helps me out on the field as I'm currently playing in my second Premier League season.

MF: Now you and Cesar I take it both share a South American heritage - are the two of you friends, and was there a special arrangement made in order to get the both of you to sign with Heidelberg?

AO: Yes, we're good friends off the field. When Heidelberg approached me (in the off-season) I didn't know if Cesar was likely to come here. I had had other offers put to me from other Premier League clubs. After I signed up, the club told me they were chasing Cesar as well. Cesar did go to Westgate part-way through last season, and from there he ended up coming here, although I'm not sure of the details of his signing.

You are the Victorian Premier League's top scorer with 9 goals



Alfonso Opazo: Heidelberg's prolific young striker.

from 13 games. Have you set a goal-scoring target to achieve by season's end?

AO: Once you are off the mark at the start of the season you start to get an idea of what you can reach. I just go out and try to score every game in order to get the club the win. If I don't get a goal in a particular game then the next week I'll try and score two goals.

MF: With the reputation you've established for yourself as a game winner, you will have no doubt caught the attention of not only the rest of the Victorian Premier League, but the National League as well. Have you been sounded out by any NSL clubs to date?

AO: I've heard things in the pipeline but not directly. I will leave all that up to the interested club.

MF: What are your long-term aims in football?

AO: Well, my long-term aim is to reach the National League, and then maybe one day go overseas. That's what I've wanted to do since a young age.

This is my last year at university - I'm doing a Bachelor of Business Management at Victoria University of Technology - I'd like to finish that so that I will have something to fall back on. Hopefully, next year or the year after would be great for me to step up to that level. I remember the words my father often said to me - "When you finish your schooling, you can go wherever you would like to be".

MF: Alfonso, thanks very much for speaking with me today.

Jeff Olver Returns to Heidelberg this time as coach

Our second Heidelberg star is one of Australia's best former-custodians and coach of Heidelberg and Carlton's Academy team, Jeff Olver

MF: Jeff, I'd like to start proceedings by asking you what is your best memory from your playing days?

JO: Obviously there have been a few great memories, such as playing 300 NSL games, plus a number of times for my country. Probably the most memorable time was the Olympics in 1988 - qualifying for it and then going over there and getting a result against teams like Yugoslavia as it was then. As well as that there were the games against Brazil including those during the Bicentennial Cup, where we played against guys like Romario and Taffarel - obviously that was also a great memory.

Another great occasion was playing for the first time at home in Melbourne for my country. My first fifteen international games were away, and playing at home in front of my parents against Everton in the Nissan Challenge Cup (I happened to save a couple of penalties that day) was a fantastic moment.

Even playing with Bulleen and winning a couple of championships with them, as well as one at Heidelberg - these are all good memories. But 1988 is probably the best memory - after having played at that elite level as an international player.

MF: A bit of nostalgia for you. Cast your mind back to the World Cup qualifiers in 1989 against Israel and New Zealand, where you and fellow

Socceroos played in front of 40,000-50,000 plus crowds.

Many of your team-mates during the qualifiers have become household names first through playing and then through their respective coaching appointments i.e. Alan Davidson, Mike Petersen, Frank Farina, David Mitchell, Graham Arnold and Eddie Krncevic. Was it always the ambition of one Jeff Olver to coach a club with an NSL pedigree, such as Heidelberg?

JO: I've been in the coaching game since 1986, and no disrespect to the guys you just mentioned, but I've done my apprenticeship over a long period of time.

Perhaps the difference between them and me is that they went overseas and I didn't. I suppose goalkeepers

are seen a bit like drummers in a band to a certain extent, where the lead singer tends to get all the accolades, yet the guy up the back who keeps the beat and keeps everything going might not. After the band breaks up the lead singer tends to go on and become successful and the drummer tends to go somewhere else.

Goalkeepers tend to be a little bit like that. I've been getting ready to coach NSL for the last fifteen years - ever since I've been involved in coach education.

I coached at Premier League level when I was young as a player/coach, and I've been coaching via two stints here at Heidelberg.

Continued on page 24

Green Gully Cavaliers

This Sunday May 21
Reserves 5pm Seniors 7pm

v Altona Magic

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CRAZY JOHN'S VICTORIA RESULTS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 1: Firsts: Rd 7: Richmond 0 Spring, White Eagles 0, South Dandenong 2 (Korkanic F, Corallo G) Westvale 4 (Peppas G (3), Goutzioulis A), Lalor United 2 (Filiposki I (2)) Doncaster Rovers 1 (Hackett S), Sunshine Georgies 1 (Hynds S) Essendon 3 (Medugorac M, O'Donnell J, Barbieri A), Western Suburbs 2 (Mussel G, Gavran T) Westgate 1 (Spiteri D), Frankston Pines 5 (Lewis C (3), Keenan S, Lettieri T) Yarraville Glory 1 (Keranis J)

Reserves: Rd 7: Richmond 5 Spring, White Eagles 0, South Dandenong 2 Westvale 1, Lalor United 1 Doncaster Rovers 1, Sunshine Georgies 1 Essendon 3, Western Suburbs 1 Westgate 2, Frankston Pines 2 Yarraville Glory 2

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 2 NW: Firsts: Rd 7: Melbourne City 2 (Cardonne J, Grdi M) Altona City 1 (Caceres J), Werribee City 0 Geelong 2 (Stojanovski S (2)), Northcote City 0 Diamond Valley Utd 2 (Zioglis C, De Luca N), Moreland City 1 (Ward D) Satellite City Rov/S 4 (Hulsi S (2), Kasapis E, Ilievski J), Nth Geelong Warriors 0 Fitzroy City 2 (Babic V, Maljanek M), Whittlesea Stallions 2 (Stubbins P, Kablar A) North Coburg United 0

Reserves: Rd 7: Melbourne City 4 Altona City 6, Werribee City 0 Geelong 5, Northcote City 2 Diamond Valley Utd 2, Moreland City 1 Satellite City Rov/S 3, Nth Geelong Warriors 3 Fitzroy City 3, Whittlesea Stallions 2 North Coburg United 0

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 2 SE: Firsts: Rd 7: Kingston City 0 Frankston Strikers 0, Knox City 3 (Tidd M, Humble A, Stoler J) Cranbourne Comets 1 (Wright W), Old Scotch Waverley 1 (Marley S) South Wantirna 1 (Veljovic N), South Springvale 0 East Richmond 1 (Palatides C), Ringwood City 0 Springvale City 3 (Rosa A (2), Cacciotti E), Stonnington City 0 Croydon City Arrows 0

Reserves: Rd 7: Kingston City 3 Frankston Strikers 2, Knox City 0 Cranbourne Comets 1, Old Scotch Waverley 3 South Wantirna 1, South Springvale 2 East Richmond 0, Ringwood City 0 Springvale City 3, Stonnington City 0 Croydon City Arrows 2

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 3 NW: Firsts: Rd 7: Lalor 0 Pascoe Vale 2 (Bogovski V, Santos A), Keilor Park 0 Bell Park 1 (Reed A), Melton 3 (Krajina R, Docherty M, Rutherford G) North City Lions 0, Williamstown 2 (Perez R) Sunbury United 1, Corio 1 (Kwiatkowski D) Laverton Park 2 (De La Plaza V, Mauna R), Geelong Rangers 1 (Walmsley D) Croxton Park 6 (Redzepovic A (3), Julardzija S (2), Lolic A)

Reserves: Rd 7: Lalor 1 Pascoe Vale 1, Keilor Park 5 Bell Park 0, Melton 0 North City Lions 4, Williamstown 3 Sunbury United 2, Corio 1 Laverton Park 0, Geelong Rangers 3 Croxton Park 1

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE 3 SE: Firsts: Rd 7: Seaford United 0 Clifton Hill United 0, Lyndale United 0 Endeavour United 1 (Almeida P), Mooroolbark 0 Morwell Pegasus 3 (Villani C (2), Beamer D), Banyule City 0 Chelsea 1 (Grskovic T), Nunawading City 0 Keysborough 1 (Mondon V), Sandringham City 0 Langwarrin 4 (Parton S, Caffrey B, Kliner G, Caffrey L)

Reserves: Rd 7: Seaford United 0 Clifton Hill United 4, Lyndale United 10 Endeavour United 2, Mooroolbark 0 Morwell Pegasus 1, Banyule City 0 Chelsea 1, Nunawading City 2 Keysborough 2, Sandringham City 5 Langwarrin 3

2000 PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 1: Firsts: Rd 7: Hoppers Crossing 3 (Russell J (2), Gorevski J) Clayton 0, Doveton 4 (Lee R, Lee D (2), Sonn M) Nth Sunshine Eagles 2 (Muscat S, Huseyn D), Monbulk 2 (Doughty S, Stanic G) Riversdale 1 (Kyriakou A), Templestowe Eagles 2 (Iaccone P, Cardinale D) Brunswick City 1 (Fonanis J), Elwood City 3 (Craggs T (2), Jensen F) Sydenham Park 2 (Markovski T (2)), Springvale Condors 0 Mitcham United 2 (Stevens B, Beck S) Reserves: Rd 7: Hoppers Crossing 2 Clayton 3, Doveton 8 Nth Sunshine Eagles 1, Monbulk 2 Riversdale 3, Templestowe Eagles 1 Brunswick City 1, Elwood City 1 Sydenham Park 0, Springvale Condors 6 Mitcham United 4

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 2 NW: Firsts: Rd 7: Whittlesea United 1 (Yavuz S) Glenroy 2 (Rastocic S, Filipovic J), Melbourne University 1 (Watson A) Darebin United 1 (Belles A), Mill Park 1 (Mansour A) Broadmeadows United 0, Moreland United 1 (Kakos H) Ballarat 0, Somerton City 4 (Baykan S (2), Karagol A, Yaan T) Keon Park 1 (Komodromou N), South Yarra 0 Uni. Of Melbourne 2 (Ryan M (2))

Reserves: Rd 7: Whittlesea United 1 Glenroy 3, Melbourne University 0 Darebin United 2, Mill Park 1 Broadmeadows United 2, Moreland United 2 Ballarat 2, Somerton City 7 Keon Park 0, South Yarra 1 Uni. Of Melbourne 5

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 2 SE: Firsts: Rd 7: Dandenong Inter 2 (Espinoza C (2)) Dandenong 3 (Brown G, Quaremba G, Ford J), North Caulfield 1 (Antal S) Brandon Park 2 (Arzumaniyan V), Dingley City 2 (De Sovail M (2)) Braeside United 1 (Gritzalis B), Newborough/Yallourn 0 Ashburton 1 (Huigslout T), Noble Park United 3 (Dukic S, Boric S, Miljanic B) South Caulfield 1 (Nickas P), Waverley Wanderers 2 (Meimeteas G, Iliopoulos G) Heatherton United 1 (Ugarak S) Reserves: Rd 7: Dandenong Inter 0 Dandenong 2, North Caulfield 3 Brandon Park 2, Dingley City 2 Braeside United 2, Newborough/Yallourn 1 Ashburton 2, Noble Park United 6 South Caulfield 0, Waverley Wanderers 1 Heatherton United 0

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 3 NW: Firsts: Rd 7: Western Eagles 3 (Dzielakowski P (2), Rabenda L) Brimbank City 0, Preston South 5 (Vasileski G (2), Paunkoski T (3)) Watsonia Heights 3 (Tanevski P, De Matteo P, Popovski N), New South Port Utd 1 (Bajraktari H) Brimbank 8 (Pete D (3), Calandrella M (3), Pedulla J, Mihaljevic I), Ascot Vale 1 (Mejia J) West Preston 1 (Karatzafaris J), Flemington Falcons 1 (Plizzo C) Keilor United 1 (Muraca L), Northern United 7 (Nedelkov R (3), Tripunski R, Maric M, Jokanovic S, Bazenski R) Meadow Park 1 (Coustenis C)

Reserves: Rd 7: Western Eagles 5 Brimbank City 3, Preston South 3 Watsonia Heights 2, New South Port Utd 0 Brimbank 2, Ascot Vale 1 West Preston 2, Flemington Falcons 1 Keilor United 1, Northern United 4 Meadow Park 1

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE 3 SE: Firsts: Rd 7: Parkmore 1 (Varga A) La Trobe University 4 (Camichael M, Rades P (3)), Rowville Eagles 1 (Voinea M) Endeavour Hills 2 (Anthony E, Moothoo N), Collingwood City 6 (Williams P (2), Alevizos D (3), Nalbantidis A) Old Melbourneians 3 (Joyce-Hess J, Wheeler J, Wu T), Old Camberwell Gramm 0 Beaumaris 2 (Baldwin A, Bozic M), Monash University 2 (Downes D, Costaras G) Noble Park 0, Berwick Kings 0 Thornbury United 1 (Scarola L)

Reserves: Rd 7: Parkmore 0 La Trobe University 4, Rowville Eagles 2 Endeavour Hills 0, Collingwood City 4 Old Melbourneians 2, Old Camberwell Gramm 0 Beaumaris 3, Monash University 11 Noble Park 2, Berwick Kings 3 Thornbury United 2

STATE LEAGUE 1: FIRSTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
South Dandenong	7	6	0	1	28	8	18
Westvale	7	5	2	0	25	10	17
Essendon	7	5	1	1	14	9	16
Lalor United	7	5	0	2	13	8	15
Western Suburbs	7	3	1	3	10	11	10
Frankston Pines	7	3	1	3	12	15	10
Yarraville Glory	7	3	1	3	14	18	10
Richmond	7	2	1	4	8	15	7
Doncaster Rovers	7	1	2	4	11	14	5
Spring. White Eagles	7	0	3	4	4	12	3
Westgate	7	1	0	6	9	18	3
Sunshine Georgies	7	2	0	5	6	16	3

STATE LEAGUE 2 NW: FIRSTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Fitzroy City	7	6	1	0	26	5	19
Whittlesea Stallions	7	6	1	0	17	8	19
North Coburg United	7	6	0	1	12	6	18
Satellite City Rov/S	7	4	3	0	16	3	15
Diamond Valley Utd	7	3	2	2	9	7	11
Geelong	7	2	3	2	9	7	9
Nth Geelong Warriors	7	2	1	4	16	13	7
Northcote City	7	1	3	3	9	11	6
Moreland City	7	2	0	5	11	21	6
Melbourne City	7	1	2	4	7	17	5
Werribee City	7	0	2	5	8	24	-1
Altona City	7	0	0	7	7	25	-3

STATE LEAGUE 2 SE: FIRSTS	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Cranbourne Comets	7	5	1	1	21	9 16
Knox City	6	5	1	0	16	4 16
Frankston Strikers	7	4	3	0	21	1 15
Kingston City	7	4	1	2	13	7 13
South Springvale	7	4	1	2	12	6 13
Springvale City	7	2	3	2	13	12 9
Croydon City Arrows	7	2	2	3	10	8 8
Stonnington City	7	1	3	3	8	8 6
Old Scotch Waverley	7	1	3	3	6	8 6
East Richmond	7	2	0	5	7	14 6
South Wantirna	6	1	2	3	8	18 5
Ringwood City	7	0	0	7	1	31 -3

STATE LEAGUE 3 NW: FIRSTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Bell Park	7	5	1	1	13	6	16
Croxton Park	7	4	2	1	18	7	14
Lalor	7	4	2	1	10	5	14
Pascoe Vale	7	4	1	2	17	12	13
Melton	7	3	2	2	10	9	11
Williamstown	7	3	2	2	7	6	11
Laverton Park	7	3	0	4	11	10	9
Corio	7	2	2	3	11	10	8
Keilor Park	7	2	2	3	9	9	8
North City Lions	7	2	1	4	8	17	7
Geelong Rangers	7	0	3	4	6	21	3
Sunbury United	7	0	2	5	7	15	2

STATE LEAGUE 3 SE: FIRSTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Langwarrin	7	6	0	1	19	7	18
Lyndale United	7	4	2	1	14	11	14
Keysborough	7	4	1	2	14	8	13
Endeavour United	7	4	1	2	14	9	13
Chelsea	7	3	3	1	16	11	12
Morwell Pegasus	7	3	2	2	15	11	11
Clifton Hill United	7	2	3	2	11	14	9
Sandringham City	7	2	1	4	12	16	7
Nunawading City	7	1	2	4	11	14	5
Banyule City	7	1	2	4	9	16	5
Mooroolbark	7	1	2	4	7	16	5
Seaford United	7	1	1	5	7	16	4

Continued from Page 23

I coached at Premier League level when I was young as a player/coach, and I've been coaching via two stints here at Heidelberg.

I've also been involved in the coaching game with Carlton (the Academy team) for the last three years, and on top of that I was national coach of the women's team.

So, it's just a matter of getting opportunities - but sometimes you have leave your own country and then come back in order to get recognised for what you've done. I'm not being critical of Frank or David Mitchell or Eddie because they're all friends of mine but they have all gone away and have come back.

So sometimes you have to go away, lead your country overseas and then return in order to to receive due recognition.

Sometimes you get pigeon-holed and often they presume former goalies can only coach goalkeepers, yet in my case I have an advantage. Most coaches don't know how to coach goalkeepers whereas I do, as well as coach the other players.

MF: Since taking over the reins here, have you made any changes to the formation or players' positions in order to

reverse the form the team was in earlier in the season?

JO: Yeah, well obviously when I came to the club I inherited someone else's players. Having not been there for pre-season, I try to lay the groundwork in terms of the way the season can progress.

Basically I've tried to re-organise the team - I'm not trying to be critical of the former coach, but I became aware of a lack of organisation in the team.

Normally I like to play a 4-4-2 system but we've changed that system in the last three weeks and we've basically adopted a 5-3-2 system now, where we are trying to get numbers behind the ball and hit them on the break.

And that's worked fairly well - we were letting in too many goals when I first came here.

Since we changed the formation slightly we have only conceded one goal in three matches. So, we felt that if we didn't concede too many then we have a team here that can score goals, with the likes of Alfonso (Opazo) - the top goal scorer in the league.

As well, we've got George (Angelo) up front and Gerry McAleer and a few other players are quite capable of scoring goals. Plus we always look like we can score from our set plays because we are fairly well organised in that area.

We've got a lot of tall timber as well - we've got Sean Cunningham who is quite tall, plus the likes of Mile (Medjedovic) and Cameron Brown. We've got a good blend, so at the moment the team spirit here is really good.

Even when we were last on the ladder the camaraderie amongst the boys was great and obviously now that we have started to get a few results, it means that we are really not far away from the middle of the table.

We're confident we'll stay away from the relegation zone.

MF: Is it your intention to coach at NSL level in the near future?

JO: Yes, well, I work for Carlton full time, so I am currently involved in some of the aspects of coaching at NSL level - I'm doing some hands-on stuff with Stuart Munro at Carlton.

Obviously though every one has got ambitions to be the 'boss', and at Heidelberg I am the boss and I run the show.

My ambition is definitely to coach NSL. I show people that I have a reputation of being a very good developmental coach in terms of producing young players and being able to coach them and bring them on. I've spent half of my adult life at this club, which has a strong tradition, and

I think Heidelberg has the potential to be as big as South Melbourne again if they can get themselves on the right road.

Ideally I would love to coach at NSL level but there are only so many jobs available.

I've got ambitions to coach National League and I want coach my country one day.

That is my goal - I have played for my country, and it's my goal to go on and coach my country. That's what I intend to do, I'll do it - I might be sixty years old, but I believe if I get a chance, I'm confident I will be able to do the job. You have just got to be patient and wait your turn.

MF: Just one last question - apparently South Melbourne Soccer Club was flooded with applications for the coaching role left vacant by newly-appointed Australian youth coach Ange Postecoglou. Did you put in an application for the position yourself?

JO: Yes, I was asked to - a committee man here at Heidelberg asked me to put in an application. South Melbourne is seen as one of the leading clubs in Australia, but they may not have lived up to their potential to date.

If the opportunity arises to coach at such a club you'd be silly not to take the opportunity.

Improving Heidelberg hold Gully

HEIDELBERG UNITED 0

Round Thirteen

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 0

Monday evening at the Olympic Village, Melbourne. Crowd: about 900.



By Mark Fisher

A game littered with half chances was the best way to describe Heidelberg's clash with Green Gully last Monday night (after IS goes to press.)

With Heidelberg needing maximum points to keep them more comfortably adrift of the relegation zone, and with a depleted Green Gully side looking eager to further extend their lead on the pack, the pre-match billing promised a lot more than an honest 0-0 draw.

The defensive work on the part of Green Gully kept them in the game throughout, particularly through the efforts of the tireless Zoran Markovski and a brilliant performance by newly-blooded youngster Stephen Camelleri. Camelleri came into the senior team in order to fill the void left by suspended stalwart Steve Douglas.

Indeed the Gully back three all did a fairly good job of scrambling and chasing when Heidelberg's dangermen Alfonso Opazo and George Angelo cut through on the break. Opazo particularly looked menacing in the second half.

The first decent chance of the game came in the 28th minute when Zdravko Atanasovski sent a free kick from the left flank to the head of George Svigos, who was perfectly positioned near the centre of the penalty area.

Svigos helped the ball on to the far post with a bobbing

header, offering Tony Neceski a gilt-edged volley, which somehow travelled across the face of goal and out over the by-line.

Arthur Tsonis for Heidelberg was next to find an opportunity in the 31st minute, when Gully 'keeper Robert Brian downward palmed a ball that had been delivered deep into the area, only to witness Tsonis size up a genuine crack at goal from 15 metres out. Tsonis rushed his shot and the ball ballooned well over the bar.



Arthur Tsonis: had a good chance for Heidelberg on 31 minutes.

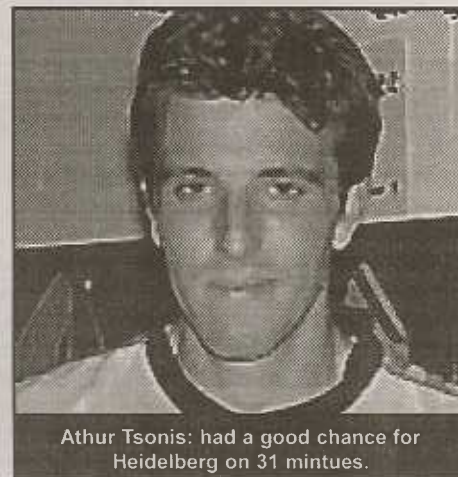
Heidelberg looked more dominant in the middle during the first half, but faded slightly in the second, offering Gully more room down the flanks. Atanasovski worked well but found Peter Di Iorio a difficult prospect to deal with along his preferred patch of real estate on the left.

Opazo seemed destined to get through the back gates as the game wore on, and his moment came in the 60th minute after substitute Tony Ouliaris pro-

pelled upfield a 40 metre long ball into the striker's path.

Only Markovski was able to keep up, and he flung out a leg to jolt the ball free of Opazo's wind-up at goal from just inside the box, with a nervous Brian shaping to block the strike. In the end the ball trickled forward for Brian to reel in after Markovski's clever disarming play.

Nick Papadopoulos (pictured) was full of running through the middle, from opening to final whistle. His powerful 20-metre strike at goal in the 54th minute careered off Arthur Tsonis for a corner.



His ability to hold the ball up near the area with the defence closing was great to watch. In the dying stages of the game his subsequent ball through the heart of Heidelberg's backline to Neceski could have stolen a result for Gully; providing Neceski's shot from the left corner of the area was on target, rather than high and wide of the left post.

HEIDELBERG UNITED: Papas, Makris (McAleer), Brown, De Propertis, Menijedovic, Hermosilla (Ouliaris), Di Iorio, Tsonis, Opazo, Angelo, Cunningham

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS: Brian, Markovski, Spiteri, Camelleri, Georgiadis (Marinos), Atanasovski, Sevin, Suric, Svigos, Neceski, Papadopoulos

BEST PLAYERS:

3. Papadopoulos (Green Gully)
2. Tsonis (Heidelberg)
1. Camelleri (Green Gully)

Referee: Dominic Barba

VPL RESULTS

ALTONA MAGIC 2

Petrevski Z (2)

OAKLEIGH CANNONS 2

Strapelias A, Pino C

ST. ALBANS SAINTS 1

(NA)

GREEN GULLY CAVAL'RS 1

Becvinovski S

BULLEEN ZEBRAS 0

FAWKNER BLUES 0

BENTLEIGH GREENS 1

Rossios N

PRESTON LIONS 0

RESERVES:

Altona Magic 0 Oakleigh Cannons 4
St Alban Saints 0 Green Gully Cavs1
Bulleen Zebras 2 Fawknor Blues 2
Bentleigh Greens 1 Preston Lions 2

PLAYED MONDAY NIGHT:

Heidelberg United v Port Melb Sharks
Melbourne Raiders v Altona East
Phoenix

FIRST GRADE

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

BENTLEIGH GREENS

ST. ALBANS SAINTS

ALTONA MAGIC

PRESTON LIONS

BULLEEN ZEBRAS

ALTONA EAST PHOENIX

FAWKNER BLUES

OAKLEIGH CANNONS

HEIDELBERG UNITED

PORT MELBOURNESHARKS

MELBOURNE RAIDERS

P W D L F A P

14 9 3 2 27 10 30

14 7 4 3 21 13 25

14 6 5 3 25 16 23

14 5 5 4 17 17 20

14 5 4 5 18 17 19

14 5 4 5 20 21 19

13 5 3 5 14 19 18

14 3 6 5 14 16 15

14 3 6 5 21 28 15

13 4 2 7 19 24 14

13 3 3 7 20 27 12

13 2 5 6 12 20 11

RESERVES

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

BENTLEIGH GREENS

ST. ALBANS SAINTS

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS

BULLEEN ZEBRAS

ALTONA MAGIC

PRESTON LIONS

ALTONA EAST PHOENIX

FAWKNER BLUES

OAKLEIGH CANNONS

MELBOURNE RAIDERS

HEIDELBERG UNITED

P W D L F A P

14 10 2 2 45 15 32

14 8 1 5 43 23 25

14 5 6 3 30 25 21

13 6 3 4 29 27 21

14 5 4 5 40 29 19

14 5 4 5 31 35 19

14 4 6 4 31 28 18

13 5 2 6 23 26 17

14 4 5 5 29 35 17

14 4 3 7 21 39 15

13 3 5 5 25 38 14

13 1 3 9 14 41 6



VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

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ROUND FIFTEEN

Friday 19 May

Port Melbourne Sharks v St Albans Saints - Anderson Reserve
8.15(First Grade)/6.15 (Reserves)

Oakleigh Cannons v Melbourne Raiders - Jack Edwards Reserve
8.15(First Grade)/6.15 (Reserves)

Sunday 21 May

Altona East v Bentleigh Greens - Paisley Reserve
3.00(First Grade)/1.00 (Reserves)

Preston Lions v Bulleen Zebras - BT Connor Reserve
3.00(First Grade)/1.00 (Reserves)

Fawknor Blues v Heidelberg United - C.B. Smith Reserve
3.00(First Grade)/1.00 (Reserves)

Green Gully Cavaliers v Altona Magic - Green Gully Reserve
7.00(First Grade)/5.00 (Reserves)

Menapi continues goalscoring run in NZ

By Jeremy Ruane

Nelson Suburbs and Manawatu, two of the three Ansett National Club Championship teams located outside New Zealand's four main population centres, are providing the main opposition to league leaders University-Mt. Wellington after the conclusion of the competition's eighth round.

While Uni-Mount were held to a scoreless draw by Christchurch City in the South Island, two Commins Menapi goals were firing Nelson Suburbs to second place, courtesy a 2-1 victory over Dunedin Technical at Trafalgar Park.

Mads Svenstrup scored Technical's reply, while Menapi is well clear in the race for the Golden Boot, having netted ten times already this season.

Manawatu are a point behind Nelson in third spot, and have leapfrogged Central United after beating the Aucklanders 2-1 at Memorial Park.

A double-strike from Ian Robinson secured the points for the central North Island team, with Daniel Aliaga providing some consolation for Central in stoppage time.

The script was followed almost perfectly at Fred Taylor Park, where Waitakere City's prodigal son, Thomas Edge, returned from a self-imposed break away from top flight football to score the only goal of the game against Napier City Rovers nine minutes from

time.

With injury and suspension depriving him of Nik Viljoen and Tim Stevens, City coach Steve Cain sounded the alarm earlier in the week, and the one-time All White striker, who is still one of the most potent finishers in the game in New Zealand, responded to the call, and duly delivered.

The first half dismissal of Ryan Dawkins was the only thing to spoil an otherwise perfect day for the pre-season favourites, who, despite winning, remain in seventh place, a result of Miramar Rangers' bonus point-grabbing 4-0 win at Metro.

An unimaginative encounter witnessed by just 110 people - one of the lowest crowds ever for a game at this level in Auckland - saw Wiremu Patrick open the

scoring for the visitors after just five minutes at Albie Turner Field.

Rangers' remaining goals came in a nine-minute flurry not long before the finish, with Simon George, Nic Longley and Curtis Bernard taking advantage of some meek defending to produce a final scoreline which certainly flattered Miramar, as Metro proved themselves a more creative combination, but one lacking the finishing power to do justice to the non-stop promptings of midfield general Sean Hird.



NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND EIGHT RESULTS

Christchurch City	0-0	University-Mt. Wellington
Manawatu	2-1	Central United
I. Robinson (38, 81)		D. Aliaga (90)
Metro	0-4	Miramar Rangers
		W. Patrick (5)
		S. George (75)
		N. Longley (81)
		C. Bernard (84)
Nelson Suburbs	2-1	Dunedin Technical
C. Menapi (9, 47)		M. Svenstrup (62)
Waitakere City	1-0	Napier City Rovers
T. Edge (81)		

ROUND SEVEN RESULTS

Christchurch City	2-0	Central United
D. Hutchinson (7)		
B. Fisher (35)		
Manawatu	2-1	Napier City Rovers
J. Howe (86, 90)		C. McIvor (65)
Metro	1-1	Nelson Suburbs
G. Green (39)		C. Menapi (3)
Miramar Rangers	2-3	University-Mt. Wellington
T. Butterfield (75)		S. Roberts (33)
C. Bernard (85)		M. Hicks (40)
A. Brown (55)		
Waitakere City	2-1	Dunedin Technical
T. Stevens (47)		A. Burgess (78)
J. Medhurst (60)		

Jamie Howe's two late goals shock Rovers

By Jeremy Ruane

In round seven results University-Mt. Wellington went back on top of the Ansett National Club Championship, succeeding Central United, whose 2-0 loss at Christchurch City was their second loss in the South Island this season.

Deane Hutchinson's second goal in as many weeks opened the scoring for City in the seventh minute, with Junior All White Brent Fisher wrapping up the scoring ten minutes before half-time, a result which propels Ian Marshall's side to sixth place on the table, six points off the lead.

This has been assumed by Uni-Mount, whose 3-2 win at Miramar Rangers was marred by an injury to goalkeeper Simon Eaddy. Stu Roberts, Marc Hicks and Andy Brown saw the Auckland club shoot out to a 3-0 lead, before Tim Butterfield and Curtis Bernard scored in the last fifteen minutes to reduce the final margin of victory to the odd goal.

Nelson Suburbs slipped into third place with a 1-1 draw at bottom-of-the-table Metro, but squandered the chance to climb higher still,

Commins Menapi missing a 28th minute

penalty, having opened the scoring after just 155 seconds.

Graham Green restored parity for Metro just before the interval in an entertaining match which made light of the rain-soaked conditions at Anderson Park.

Napier City Rovers were on course to climb the table late in their match at Memorial Park, Palmerston North.

Chris McIvor had given The Blues the lead at Manawatu, but two Jamie Howe goals in the last four minutes turned the home side's despair to delight at the death, in a match which saw Rovers' Perry Cotton sent off with seven minutes remaining, having committed two bookable offences.

The day's other dismissal came at Fred Taylor Park, where Tim Stevens was both hero and villain for Waitakere City against Dunedin Technical. Having opened the scoring in the 47th minute, a rash lunge saw Stevens enduring an early shower just two minutes after Jared Medhurst had doubled City's advantage on the hour.

Aaron Burgess gave the southerners hope late on, but City held on to their 2-1 lead to the finish.

*For technical reasons we could not print round seven until this week.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	BP	Pts
Uni-Mount	8	5	1	2	15	14	+1	1	17
Nelson Suburbs	8	4	3	1	15	11	+4	1	16
Manawatu	8	4	2	2	16	11	+5	1	15
Central United	8	4	1	3	14	10	+4	1	14
Napier C.R.	8	3	1	4	14	8	+6	2	12
Miramar Rangers	8	3	2	3	15	14	+1	1	12
Waitakere City	8	4	0	4	13	12	+1	0	12
Christchurch C.	8	3	1	4	13	17	-4	1	11
Dunedin Tech.	8	2	1	5	9	16	-7	0	7
Metro	8	1	2	5	7	18	-11	0	5

*BP = Bonus points

ROUND NINE FIXTURES (MAY 21)

Dunedin Technical v. Napier City Rovers - New Caledonian, Dunedin
Manawatu v. Miramar Rangers - Memorial Park, Palmerston North
Metro v. Christchurch City - Albie Turner Field, Auckland
Nelson Suburbs v. Central United - Trafalgar Park, Nelson
Waitakere City v. University-Mt. Wellington - Fred Taylor Park, Auckland

NSL Finals stats

with Greg Blake

ALL THE MAJOR SEMI FINAL RECORDS

MAJOR SEMI FINAL RECORD SCORE:
Marconi 7 - South Melbourne 0 (1992/93 2nd Leg).

MAJOR SEMI FINAL RECORD CROWD:
14,850 for South Melbourne v Carlton at Bob Jane Stadium (1997/98)

MAJOR SEMI FINAL HIGHEST SINGLE GAME AGGREGATE SCORE:
Seven goals: Marconi 7 - South Melbourne 0 (1992/93 2nd Leg)

MAJOR SEMI FINAL BEST SINGLE GAME GOALSCORING PERFORMANCE:
Doug Brown (2 goals for South Melbourne v Melbourne Knights in 1984) and Andy Harper (2 goals for Marconi v South Melbourne in 1992/93)

MOST MAJOR SEMI FINALS:
South Melbourne and Melbourne Knights (7)

MAJOR SEMI FINAL WINNERS TO TAKE TITLE:
South Melbourne (1984) #
Melbourne Zebras (1985) #
Adelaide City (1986) #
Marconi (1989)
Marconi (1992/93)
Melbourne Knights (1995/96)
Brisbane Strikers (1996/97)
South Melbourne (1997/98)
South Melbourne (1998/99)

Denotes winner of a divisional major semi, when league was divided between southern and northern sections.

MAJOR SEMI FINAL RESULTS DOWN THE YEARS:
(All matches in the cities of the first-named clubs)

1984 - (Sth Div) South Melbourne 3 - Melbourne Knights 2
(Nth Div) Sydney City 1 - Sydney Olympic 1
* Sydney City wins 4-2 on penalties

1985 - (Sth Div) Melbourne Zebras 1 - South Melbourne 0
(Nth Div) Sydney City 1 - Sydney United 0

1986 - (Sth Div) Adelaide City 2 - Melbourne Zebras 0

(Nth Div) St George 3 - Sydney United 0

1988 - Sydney United 0 - Wollongong City 0
* Sydney Utd wins 4-3 on penalties

1989 - Marconi 1 - St George 0

89/90 - Marconi 1 - Melbourne Knights 0

90/91 - Melbourne Knights 1 - South Melbourne 0

91/92 - Melbourne Knights 0 - South Melbourne 0
* Knights win 5-3 on penalties

92/93 - (1st Leg) South Melbourne 0 - Marconi 1
(2nd Leg) Marconi 7 - South Melbourne 0
* Marconi wins 8-0 on aggregate

93/94 - (1st Leg) South Melbourne 1 - Melbourne Knights 2
(2nd Leg) Melbourne Knights 2 - South Melbourne 2
* Knights win 4-3 on aggregate

94/95 - (1st Leg) Adelaide City 1 - Melbourne Knights 0
(2nd Leg) Melbourne Knights 1 - Adelaide City 2
* Adelaide City wins 3-1 on aggregate

95/96 - (1st Leg) Melbourne Knights 1 - Marconi 0
(2nd Leg) Marconi 2 - Melbourne Knights 2
* Knights win 3-2 on aggregate

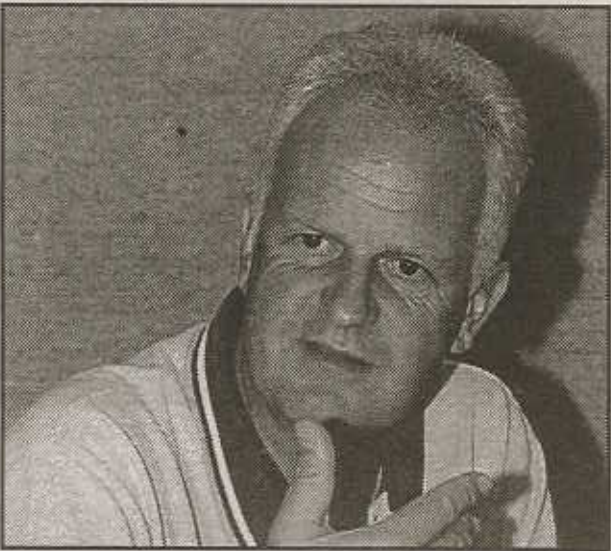
96/97 - (1st Leg) Brisbane Strikers 1 - Sydney United 0
(2nd Leg) Sydney United 2 - Brisbane Strikers 1
* Brisbane wins on away goals

97/98 - (1st Leg) Carlton 1 - South Melbourne 2
(2nd Leg) South Melbourne 1 - Carlton 0
* Sth.Melbourne wins 3-1 on aggregate

98/99 - (1st Leg) South Melbourne 2 - Sydney United 1
(2nd Leg) Sydney United 0 - South Melbourne 0
* Sth Melbourne wins 2-1 on aggregate



Bernd Stange with the minor premiership. His Glory go to Wolves this Sunday.



The run towards June 11

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL				PRELIMINARY FINAL		GRAND FINAL	
W/E 21 May 2000		W/E 28 May 2000		W/E 4 June 2000		W/E 11 June 2000	
2	Wollongong Wolves v	Perth Glory v		Loser Major semi-final		Winner Major Semi-Final	
1	Perth Glory	Wollongong Wolves				V	
ELIMINATION FINALS				MINOR SEMI-FINAL		Winner of Preliminary Final	
W/E 14 May 2000		W/E 21 May 2000		V		Winner Minor semi-final	
6	Marconi 0	Carlton v					
3	Carlton 1	Marconi Stallions		V		Winner 4 v 5	
5	Sydney Olympic 4	Adelaide City Force v					
4	Adelaide Force 1	Sydney Olympic		V		Winner 3 v 6	

LIVE FRIDAY 19 MAY 7.30PM
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 13

**CARLTON
 V MARCONI STALLIONS**



STALLIONS

- 1 Michael Turnbull
- 2 Chad Gibson
- 3 Mark Babic
- 4
- 5 Dominic Longo
- 6 Pan-Keum Kim
- 7 Christian Care
- 8 Darren McDonald
- 9 Zeljko Babic
- 10 Brad Maloney
- 11 Mike Smith
- 12
- 13 Danny Invincible
- 14 Buddy Farah
- 15 Pierluigi di Gia
- 16
- 17 Francis Awaritefe
- 18 Harry Karl
- 19 Brendan Renaud
- 20 David Aceski
- 21 Paolo Marchesini
- 22 Kris Trajanovski
- 23 Vlado Zoric
- 24 Josala Junior Sauturaga
- 25
- 26 Daniel Severino

CARLTON

- 1 Dean Anastasiadis
- 2 Dave McPherson
- 3 Craig Deans
- 4 Simon Colosimo
- 5 Sean Douglas
- 6 Andrew Marth
- 7 Stuart Slater
- 8 Mark Atkinson
- 9 Alex Moreira
- 10 Lubo Lapsansky
- 11 Archie Thompson
- 12 Mike Conroy
- 13 Steve Martin
- 14 John Markovski
- 15 Con Anthopoulos
- 16 David Terminello
- 17 Joe Tricarico
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21 Andrew Packer
- 22 Angelo Moutsopoulos
- 23 Colin Azzopardi
- 24 Joshua Kennedy
- 25 Daniel Vasilevski
- 26 Steve Horvat



Venue: Marconi Stadium
Friday 19 May 7.30PM
Head-to-Head: 8
Carlton: 5
Stallions: 2
Draws: 1
Last Week: Carlton 0-1 away win over Stallions.
 Stallions 0-1 home loss to Carlton.



LIVE SUNDAY 21 MAY 5.00
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**WOLLONGONG WOLVES
 V PERTH GLORY**



WOLVES

- 1 Les Pogliacomi
- 2 George Souris
- 3 Alvin Ceccoli
- 4 Robert Stanton
- 5 David Cervinski
- 6 Matt Horsley
- 7 Paul Reid
- 8
- 9
- 10 Stuart Young
- 11 Scott Chipperfield
- 12 Neil Harlock
- 13 Noel Spencer
- 14 Saso Petrovski
- 15 David Huxley
- 16 Peter Lahanas
- 17 Esala Masi
- 18 Paul O'Grady
- 19 Paul Dimech
- 20 Daniel Beltrame
- 21 Mark Robertson
- 22 Ben Blake
- 23 Dino Mennillo

GLORY

- 1 Tom Tomich
- 2 Robert Trajkovski
- 3 Jamie Harnwell
- 4 Aurelio
- 5 Vinko Buljbasic
- 6 Gareth Naven
- 7 Scott Miller
- 8 Troy Halpin
- 9 Alistair Edwards
- 10 Bobby Despotoski
- 11 Kasey Wehrman
- 12 Peter Buljan
- 13 James Afkos
- 14 Dion Valle
- 15 Edgar Junior
- 16
- 17
- 18 Hamilton Thorp
- 19 John Carbone
- 20 Tony Franken
- 21 Ivan Ergic
- 22 Ljubo Milicevic
- 23 Jason Petkovic
- 24 Aaron Cole



Venue: Brandon Park
Sunday 21 May 5.00PM
Head to Head: 8
Wolves: 3
Glory: 4
Draws: 1
Last Week: Wolves 2-1 away loss to Carlton.
 Glory 1-0 home win over Spirit.



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